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# **Regionally Responsive Approaches to Residential Design in England**

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**PhD**

**Principal Supervisor: Professor Bob Giddings**  
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**2017**



# **Regionally Responsive Approaches to Residential Design in England**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
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&  
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## Abstract

During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, concern started to grow that the towns of England were losing their individual identity. This unease became most evident in the development of new houses. The aim of the study is therefore to produce a framework that encapsulates recommendations to assist in the development of regionally responsive houses. The research is located in England, and specifically in the market towns of the North East. This is because Northumberland is perceived as a remote county, and therefore strongly expressive of the region. Within the county, the market towns are centres of traditional lifestyles, and therefore places where regionalism is most likely to be found. The focus is on domestic architecture, as this is individuals' most immediate and personal interaction with the built environment. An early part of the study was to investigate the concepts of regionalism and regional architecture. The history of regionalism has been a transition from local methods to increasingly standardised approaches to design. This has resulted in a loss of identity through the use of design strategies that are not context driven. It is a lack of focus on region that makes similar architectural responses ubiquitous. Without a concerted focus on specific places, the nuances of climate, culture, and materiality cannot be sufficiently explored. Although there has been significant research into variation of architectural response and material use, there is no overall picture of the significance of vernacular architecture. However, as these houses are historic by nature, questions emerge about their relevance and whether they are replicable. The neo-vernacular revival may be a response.

The study confirms the widely-held belief that speculative housebuilders dominate the market for new homes in England. These housebuilders started to produce the same houses all over the country, with little challenge from development control. The response was residential design guides, which aim to preserve the unique qualities of the built environment that have contributed to the character of market towns. However, their consistent emphasis on the past, does not offer the basis for developing a framework that can deliver contemporary regionally-expressive domestic architecture. Thus, a fundamental appraisal of home was undertaken, as a means of unpacking positive interaction between people, place and building that can form a set of socio-cultural values. The purpose of the appraisal was to identify aspects that may contribute to regional identity. This was applied in terms of the development of market towns in England, and a system for the architectural analysis of their houses. Corbridge in Northumberland, was selected as a typical market town, and the system was employed to assess its houses. The outcomes were verified by similar analyses of schemes in three other market towns in the region. Residents in all four towns were interviewed to determine the factors that influenced their purchase of the houses. Architects, planners and house developers were also interviewed to determine their perspectives. All parts of the study contributed to the framework, which is organised in terms of historical context, geographical context and design considerations based on the architectural analysis.

*DEDICATION*

*I would like to dedicate this thesis to the memory of Dr Thomas Faulkner,*

*I know he would be very proud.*

*I would also like to give my heartfelt thanks my family and friends,*

*who have put up with (endured) a great deal on  
this journey and last but not least, my wonderful son*

*Samuel Leo Moreton*

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*I would also like to thank Professor John Woodward and Professor Allan Osbourne for their patience and support throughout this process. Finally I would like to thank the late Dr Thomas Faulkner for his support, advice and sound knowledge in this field.*

## DECLARATION

I declare that the work contained within this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is my own work. I also confirm this work fully acknowledges the opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others.

Name: Leo Moreton

Signature:

Date:

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*Introduction to Thesis*

## Introduction to Thesis

### Context

It can be argued that the appreciation of traditional houses, goes back to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and the picturesque movement. This appreciation was revived by the Arts and Crafts movement and re-engagement with the craft process. It promoted a sense of tradition within art and design, providing an aesthetic treatment which celebrated the pre-industrial (Baines and Brooks 1999). The legacy of this movement, can be seen in the liberal application of exposed timber framing, stone cladding, finials, bargeboards, pargetting and in some cases jettying and hung tiles, and other Tudor-bethan elements. These aspects of traditional architecture are often associated with different regions, however their application in housing developments appears to be a little more arbitrary (Lewis 2003). The Garden City Movement represents another aspiration that seems firmly imprinted on the British psyche. This is the notion of a rural idyll; particularly as a reaction to intensified urbanism (Barker 2009). The cottage aesthetic which developed as an integral part of Garden Cities, was viewed as desirable image, as it reflected romantic notions of pre-industrial rural life. The use of village greens and even ponds reflected a generic representation of

the traditional English village. Developments continued to use the terraced form and an aesthetic that alluded to historic building. Steep roof pitches and shorter façades helped to align suburban terraced developments more closely to the idea of the English village (Osband 2000). Whether this image actually appeared in villages, or whether it was just a romanticised impression from a kind of golden age, is open to speculation. Analysis of the building elements requires investigation within the regional context, although it is also debatable as to how much a national model contributes to the concept of regionalism. The development of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century suburbs is closely aligned with the semi-detached form. In this period, lower densities and the use of crescents and cul-de-sacs emerge, as does provision for cars. This is all associated with the progress of technology and the rise in private home ownership. The post Great War Homes Fit For Heroes closely mirrored Garden Cities in their suburban development. The styles were tailored to the growing middle classes and priced accordingly. One of the specific objectives was to create a visual separation between private houses and council housing, (Edwards 1981). The semi-detached model was adaptable and variable, in its treatment of facades, roofs and openings. Together with the introduction of quasi village greens, these houses allude to the dream

of a golden age, rural pasture and thatched cottages (Stephenson 2007). Yet, there were significant differences. The term estate was used, and names given to streets within developments echoed this notion, referring to trees or local areas, villages and towns. Whilst this had occurred to a limited extent in the 19th Century, the practice was employed in the majority of private developments in this period (Barker 2009). There was also a loss of coherence in the built form with what has been termed semi-detached scatter (Allan 1992). Traditional arrangements, by contrast, produced continuous rows of buildings that defined the external spaces.

Rebuilding after the second war presented an opportunity to modernist architects to reshape the design of housing. This led the way for simple forms with minimal decoration to be constructed, using new technologies and building strategies. Despite successive town planning acts, the almost desperate need for new houses produced a situation in which the design of new houses was less scrutinised than the location, as zoning by function was the dominant doctrine. Although predominantly in the burgeoning public sector, modernism was not exclusively found there. Nevertheless, the vast majority of private houses were developed by speculative housebuilders, who were now able to operate throughout the country.

Political imperatives for urban renewal enabled the redevelopment machine to move into even higher gear during the 1960s, and numbers of houses were demolished, mainly because they were old. The public bought into the machine age, as their new houses offered comfort and facilities, they had never seen previously. Only with the property crash of 1973, and almost the invention of conservation, did people start to look around and wonder what had happened to their familiar towns. An attempt to re-assert the traditional forms of houses, led to the introduction of a number of design guides by local authorities. However, the 1980s was a decade that hastened capitalism and globalisation. It was therefore only towards the end of the Century that the concepts of place and identity started to become important. The Labour Government appreciated this new mood and established the Urban Task Force (Rogers 1999) and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk> 2011) as a means establishing these concepts. Yet, the speculative housebuilders have continued regardless, and the present Government has identified a large deficiency in the number of new houses, exacerbated by the financial crash in 2009; and the need not to inhibit construction. Within this context, there is still a desire for houses to relate to their locality, to display regional identity, and not to live in a

country where everywhere looks the same.

Establishing what regional domestic architecture may be, could present a complex debate. Much of the literature focuses on what might be termed exemplar architecture and individual houses. Critical Regionalism challenges the scale of what constitutes a region (Tzonis and Lefaivre 1981). Mumford (1941) proposes a theoretical standpoint on the establishment of architectural expression in the USA that is reflective of a defined context, without resorting to historicism. This might be more arguable in other countries, with longer histories. In much of the writing on regionalism and architecture, there is limited analysis of specifics on social, cultural and political attitudes; in order to establish more holistic approaches to design. Rappaport (1969) and Oliver (2001) both note the influence of site on the characteristics of architectural responses, as a key factor in differentiation by region.

References to the past may be significant in relation to domesticity in England, as they reflect a cultural engagement with historic notions of home. The references allude to a period prior to mass production; when variation and individuality were part of the happenstance of house design. In examining regional architectural approaches in England, it might be pre-industrial houses that are most

apparent. Brunskill (1973) was the first to explore regional variation in what is loosely termed vernacular architecture. However, it may be that the vernacular is no longer replicable. There was a period of neo-vernacular and this period needs exploration to determine whether it really advances knowledge about regional house design. Any notion of regionalism needs to be related to the principles of house and home in England, of which home ownership forms an integral part. Attitudes towards the nature of home can be seen as being different from the rest of Europe. There is a strong emphasis on ownership, with higher density urban development proving to be unpopular, and individual houses still dominate the private market (Maudlin 2009). During the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, a pattern emerged in which the established middle classes sought out homes from Edwardian and Victorian eras, and even older properties, while the new middle classes sought these qualities in new development (Long 1993). Many older properties are sited on streets, whereas the exclusivity offered by estates and the security, seclusion and status of cul-de-sacs provide the location for many new houses.

The perception of home has changed since the 1980s. It is no longer just somewhere to live. Residents have been seeking an aesthetic to their houses that exudes tradition and permanency,



in the context of an increasingly virtual and ethereal world. House-buyers experienced and even participating in the backlash against modernism and the perception of urban decay and poor quality workmanship again, led them to opt for more of what appeared to be more of a craft approach. The aesthetics of contemporary development are really looking backwards to garden suburbs and even the picturesque. In adopting historic elements, a developer is also conveying and encoding a sense of timeless permanence, which relates to attitudes of property as a secure investment. In essence, it offers the visual aesthetics associated with tradition, yet provides the technological and lifestyle requirements of the present (Maudlin 2009). Much like an exercise in set design, it is offering an approximation of an ideal regionalism. The appeal of this historical approach and the affectations associated with it, still display a notion of what England once might have been, providing comfort and reassurance (Scott 2013).

### **The Study**

This research is located in England, and specifically in the market towns of the North East. This is because Northumberland is perceived as a remote county, and therefore strongly expressive of the region. Within the county, the market towns are centres of

traditional lifestyles, and therefore places where regionalism is most likely to be found. The focus is on domestic architecture, as this is individuals' most immediate and personal interaction with the built environment. Much of the urban and rural landscape of England has been shaped through dwelling (Carmona 2002). The standardisation of housing types by developers has undoubtedly contributed to a homogenising of the residential environment. One of the arguments to be explored, is whether regionalism can be experienced on a smaller scale. This may be seen in a minority of houses, as opposed to a majority that have adopted a national architectural language. Alternatively, there is a notion of adorning new homes with details, in order to distinguish them as individual (Hooper, Nichol 2010). Many of these details could be used as approximations of past ornament and refer to an imagined vernacular, as well as more formalised aesthetics of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries (Lewis 2014). Regionalism may be derived from these elements, and therefore an architectural analysis of them may be important to the study. A traditional market town will be selected as a case study, within which a development that demonstrates the characteristics of tradition, yet providing the technological and lifestyle requirements of the present; will be examined to determine if it is truly regional expression. This development will be compared with a

small number of others in the region that have been selected by purchasers for their traditional appearance. This will lead to an evaluation of this approach as a representation of regional house design. The intention will be to generate recommendations that may assist developers to build future regionally responsive houses.

### **Aim and Objectives**

The aim of the study is therefore to produce a Framework that will encapsulate recommendations to assist in the development of regionally responsive houses. This will be achieved through the following objectives:

- To explore notions of regions and regionalism
- To investigate the vernacular and neo-vernacular as a means of informing the framework
- To discover patterns of speculative house development, which is the most prevalent type of house procurement in England
- To examine concepts of house and home as contributions to the notion of regionally informed design
- To scrutinise residential design guides to discover the kind of house designs that they may deliver
- To assess English market towns as traditional manifestations of domestic

built form

- To identify elements of buildings that may express regional construction
- To survey a particular market town to determine the nature of its residential architecture
- To research a specific development in the market town and produce an analytical comparison with a small number of similar developments in the North East Region of England, as a means of adding primary data to the Framework

## Summary of Chapters

### 1.0 Regions and Regionalism

In examining regionalism and regional architecture, the converse notion of universality is more easily defined, it stems from increasingly standardised approaches to design and material. This has resulted in a loss of identity through the use of design strategies that are not context driven. It is a lack of focus on region that makes similar architectural responses ubiquitous. Without a concerted focus on a specific place, the nuances of climate, culture, and materiality cannot be sufficiently explored. The nature of region may be difficult to define. In order to understand a regional approach to architectural design, the research needs to be fixed within a geographic

and cultural setting.

### 2.0 Vernacular Architecture and Region

Although there has been significant research into variation of architectural response and material use, there is no overall picture of the significance of vernacular architecture. Locating vernacular study in a particular region, and examining the buildings of different periods collectively may be a means of establishing the principles of a regional domestic architecture. However, as these buildings are generally historic, questions emerge about their distribution and survival. In the context of this thesis whether they are replicable. The neo-vernacular revival may be a response. The objective is therefore to assess how much the revival can inform regional domestic design.

### 3.0 Speculative Development

The investigation into speculative development has shown that in England, housebuilders dominate the market for new homes. From the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the advent of suburbia moved house form onto semi-detached and detached houses away from the traditional terrace. The demand for these forms became focussed on the margins of traditional towns. The rise

in car ownership and the layout of crescents and cul-de-sacs affected traditional patterns, leading to towns being classified as historical centres. The demand for houses which carry aspects of traditional architecture and disguise all sorts of modifications; while the façade and entrance have arguably received the most attention. Volume housebuilders produce the similar houses throughout the country, with little challenge from development control.

### 4.0 Notions of House and Home in England

This chapter focuses on clarifying the concept of home and its relationship with culture in England. The term home can have different interpretations, and it is often confused with house, which can be seen as the physical entity. Home exceeds the physical form of a shelter that is a primary objective of house. Home also includes social relations between individuals and groups and an emotional meaning, which is formed between residents and their places of residence. It can be a private environment in which symbols, dreams, ideas and aspirations might develop. It also has the potential to be a transactional location where residents interact with an environment, which changes over time and leads to behavioural, emotional and cognitive bonding with a meaningful physical setting. Home culturally in England is also intrinsically linked with status.

## 5.0 Residential Design Guides

Many local authorities have responded to speculative housebuilders, developing similar houses throughout the country by publishing their own design guides. It has also been noted that some speculative housebuilders sought to distance themselves from the volume housebuilders, by seeking to promote their dwellings in the same sort of language as these design guides. It has also been shown that a house is a physical structure that provides spaces for residential activities. However, in this instance it is the appearance of the house that determines its credentials for regional expression. Its transformation into a home, is determined primarily by social and cultural qualities that are also part of a region. This chapter will analyse the design guides in terms of regional expression of house and home, and conclude whether or not they provide a framework for regionally responsive design.

## 6.0 The Development of Market Towns in England

Market towns are representative of a pre-industrial past in England. In many instances their centres have retained much

of their historic character and architecture. They still provide a focal point for rural communities and continue in some cases, to perform their traditional functions of agricultural trade. They have retained at their core, a pattern of development which occurred prior to industrialisation. These historic centres have become focal points, as their character is cited as being key to local identity and an integral part of tourist economies. The character and identity of market towns is informed by the successive communities that have inhabited them. Thus, the architectural significance of market towns is rooted in their pre-industrial past and its preservation. As the design guidance demonstrated, development in market towns is a balance between retaining their historic characteristics, whilst accepting growth.

## 7.0 Architectural Analysis

Examining the architecture of market towns, requires an understanding of the key aspects of housing design and construction that must be established. This information is derived from literature concerned with the analysis of architecture. The establishment of definitions and explanations of key concepts, will

inform the overall investigation and provide a basis for architectural analysis of the data. This analysis will provide a greater understanding of historic and contemporary approaches to design, providing a summary and brief contextualisation for each aspect of the evaluation.

## 8.0 Research Methodology

A literature review of regional domestic architecture has been undertaken, by first examining the concept of region and its various interpretations within different disciplines. Through visual analysis the architecture in market towns will be assessed, informing the design framework. Key strategies have also been identified, to conduct surveys with residents in new development, to establish the primary motives for purchasing a new property in a market town. To further the understanding of housing development in these locations, a series of interviews was conducted with, planners, architects and developers, to establish their opinions based on the surveys conducted with residents. This will establish key data which will inform the development of the design framework.

## 9.0 The Historic Development of Corbridge

This section will establish the historic development of Corbridge, examining its physical development and the social, cultural and political factors which shaped this market town. This will establish the means by which, a visual analysis of architecture in Corbridge can take place.

## 10.0 Analysis of Housing Development in Corbridge

In order to establish the context in which new development takes place, it is key to understand the existing pattern of development. By using the principals established in the analysis chapter. This will form the basis for the visual analysis. It will establish the primary characteristics of development in different periods and their response to the established styles and building patterns.

## 11.0 Housing Development Analysis

In order to establish a coherent understanding of development in market towns, four schemes will be examined. The first will be, The Chains in Corbridge; this will relate to, 9.0 Historic Development and 10.0 Corbridge Analysis. In order to establish a wider understanding of the

design strategies used in market towns by developers, a comparative analysis of a further three schemes will be undertaken. These are; Pottergate, Alnwick, High Gate, Durham and Acorn Square, Prudhoe. A survey will be conducted in all four schemes with home owners, to establish their motivations for buying a property in these developments. This aspect of the investigation will be further developed, with a series of interviews with professions associated with this type of development. The participants will be from the following professions; architects, planners and developers. The aim of these studies is to develop a holistic understanding of the processes by which such schemes are developed and their function and responses to the user and the local environment.

## 12.0 Conclusion

This Introduction to the study has set out the context for research into regionally responsive residential design and the development of a design framework.

## *1.0 Regionalism & Architecture*

## 1.0 Regions and Regionalism

### 1.1 Introduction

In order to develop an understanding of regional domestic architecture, the concept of region itself must be understood. For the purposes of this analysis of region and architecture, this study will initially consider European architecture. This is with the aim of focussing the research to establish a more detailed examination of regional domestic architecture in England. The nature of regional architecture is reliant upon perceived differences in form, aesthetics and materials. A combination of, geographical, political, physical and cultural influences contribute to differences in architectural expression (Rapoport 1969).

### 1.2 Defining Region

Region is described in social geography, as an area or part of a country or the world; having definable characteristics but not always fixed boundaries. It can be perceived as relatively fluid, with a great many different criteria informing its status. The political definition describes region as being a relatively large subdivision of a country for economic,

administrative or cultural purposes and is frequently associated with an independent means of governance. It is the political interpretation of region that is the most widely recognised definition, although its origins also incorporate ideas of physical, social and cultural geography (Blij, et al. 2014). Within a national context, region can be interpreted as smaller units which are distinct enough from each other to be interpreted as separate entities (Beal 2006).

Notions of region in Western literature are first documented in relation to the habitation of land, by different tribes or peoples. These were defined in geographic terms as tribal regions. The linguistic link between language and geography is present within much of the Roman approach to region, defining boundaries based upon linguistic difference (Grant 2002). The linguistic connection also occurs in the way in which architecture has been historically understood, situated and critiqued. The cultural division of land, tribally and linguistically, alongside geographical interpretations created a synthesis between people and places. The Roman Empire itself, was administered in what were termed provinces, subsequently subdivided into dioceses, administrative

districts and smaller districts known as *coventus* (Tacitus).

The subdivision of Roman occupied land corresponds with an understanding of the importance of localised administration. This approach to administration and geography has informed the development of political regions and boundaries to the present-day (Beard 2015). Prior to this level of organisation, way-points and significant markers within the landscape informed notions of boundary and border. Man-made and natural markers provided a visual and physical delineation, more closely associated with mental mapping, (Schama 2004).

The concept of a geographical region in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, is more directly influenced by advances in cartography during the 18th Century. Developments were initially made possible by the discovery of longitude and its application in the process of surveying. As a result, a more accurate delineation of region and territory became possible. The impact on the geographic sciences led to more legible and quantifiable mapping, shaping the geopolitical and economic use. In turn, this accuracy enabled the consolidation of land as well as the ability to create and

form new territories, with clearly defined borders. The movement of borders along with the unification and division of land in this manner has shaped and reshaped much of Europe. It is the precise delineation that reflects political boundaries from an international to a local level, but is unable to quantify social and cultural and linguistic phenomena (Harvey 1991). Geographical interpretations of region can be seen in terms of the physical characteristics of a given area which might shape the notion of a region.

### **1.3 Regionalism**

It is more complex to define region in cultural and linguistic terms, as the examination of these factors in the shaping of region is more nuanced. Research in this field can be attributed to a wide range of academic disciplines including human geography, anthropology and sociology. Beal (2006) analyses region in cultural and linguistic terms. She identifies England and Scotland as being subsets of a nation; but distinct enough from each other to be considered as separate entities. Regions can be seen as a way of differentiating social associations at a level between the local and these national subsets, becoming an important part of contemporary

consciousness (Green & Pollard 2007). Everett (1979) distinguishes between what he terms conscious region, an area with a sense of its own identity and belonging together; as opposed to the idea of region proposed by geographers and historians which is more delineated by cartography and politics.

Identity is a central issue to the concept of region, with a collective feeling of belonging to a certain place. This could be in the form of collective memories, foundation myths, language or shared customs (Pocock 2005). Regionalism in cultural, social and anthropological terms is in essence about the preservation of these notions in relation to asserting an identity. In geopolitical and economic reading of the term, it can be viewed as a greater degree of decentralisation of political or economic power, in which locality takes precedence over a more centralised form of the culture of governance (Harvey 1991).

The situation is further complicated by the premise that regionalism is a counter to globalism and to an extent, free market capitalism as well (Frampton 1983). This moves the definition of regionalism towards the economic perspective; and

while language and cultural differences can be mapped, the social dimension is more difficult to quantify. Moreover, the distinction between physical and human geography is not as clear as it first appeared. This multi-faceted picture is at the core of the difficulty in defining region, which in turn presents alternative approaches to the analysis of architecture (Colquhoun 2007). Architectural regionalism is therefore set in physical, political, cultural and tribal contexts that are not clearly definable.

#### **1.4.1 Pre Industrial Regionalism**

The earliest written record of architecture being explored in terms of regional variation is in Vitruvius' Ten Books on Architecture, from the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD. It discusses the various architectural forms encountered in lands controlled by Rome in this period; linking architectural responses to the environment in which they are placed. The text reflects a Roman imperial perspective, with Italy being the most suitable climate for both building and living. What this examination provides is an early insight into the evaluation and observation of architecture and its response in different regions, examining the characteristics of houses in terms of



form and structure, in relation to climate and location. The most significant aspect in relation to this work is Vitruvius use of the word *regionum*, clearly making the distinction of architectural forms in different locations by using this term (Schofield 2009). Classical architecture can be seen as both regional and region-less. It has been claimed as a style by Western Europe, although there is evidence of it throughout a large part of the world. It created, what could



Figure 1.1: Interior of Durham Cathedral, showing simplified representations classical columns and arches (Durham World Heritage 2014).

be considered a universal approach to architecture; a set of rules and principles governing proportion and aesthetics which was replicated across many different countries. It is the imposition of Classical architecture on other cultures, which can be viewed as a universal architecture in regionalist terms (Grant 2002).

Expressions of regional differences occur in Medieval Europe. Northern European interpretations of the Romanesque emerge in the 11th Century, and are referred to as Norman (Figure 1.1) or Anglo-Norman in Britain (Toman 2007). This architecture retained classical proportions, along with the use of the rounded arch, but rejected the codification of capitals and moved away from classical ornament to more localised styles. It presented an interpretation of classical architecture which was more robust and less ornamental than previous iterations. It was more angular, defensive and militaristic in form. There is also speculation that it drew influence from timber construction found in larger domestic architecture throughout Northern Europe and Scandinavia (Whatkin 2011). Equally, it could also be a question of taste or interpretation of the sources for this style, or even the availability of



Figure 1.2: Cathedral of St Denis, Paris. Showing the transition to the pointed arch and enlargement of openings (www.bluffton.edu 2006).

masons with such skills (Toman 2007). The development of regional approaches to architectural expression in the medieval period can be more clearly seen in the emergence of Gothic styles. This form of architecture developed in a number of locations, with the first example being the twelfth century Cathedral of St Denis, Paris (Figure 1.2). The application of ornament relied substantially upon Northern European artistic traditions incorporating not only religious



iconography but also manifestations of more localised beliefs with the use of gargoyles and other mythical representations (Coldstream 2002). Gothic architecture was primarily a Northern European architectural expression, which could be viewed with disdain in Southern Europe. The title of Gothic is attributed to Giorgio Vasari (1550), who defined it as being a ‘barbarous German style’ in his publication *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*. However, examples of Gothic architecture can be found in Northern Italy, such as the Doges Palace in Venice (Nuttgens 1997). It is also associated with the form and aesthetic of timber framed architecture of the period particularly in Northern Europe; its influence seen in domestic as well as civic architecture, (Lewis 2002).

#### 1.4 .2 Neo Classical Architecture

A re-engagement with classical architecture in Italy during the Renaissance, established a reinterpretation of its role. The dissemination of the knowledge and ideas which developed in Italy in the late medieval period became assimilated into Northern European culture. Classicism provided a set of

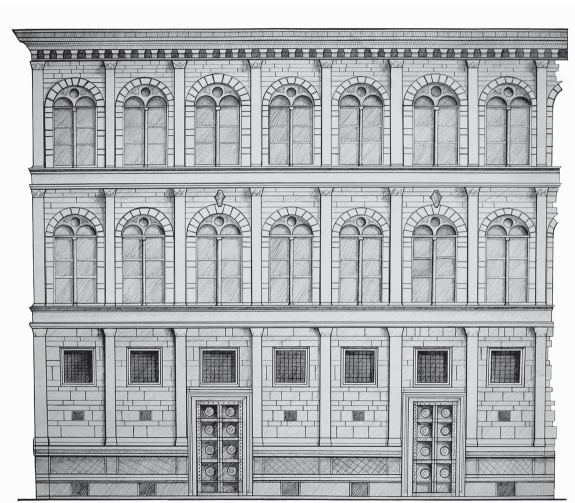


Figure 1.3: Palazzo Rucellai, Leon Battista Alberti, is an example of the use of classical orders and proportion in replication, arranged in bays (julianastruck.com 2015).

principles to the production of a wide range of emerging urban typologies (Figure 1.3). It provided a degree of standardisation in terms of design and building based upon a set of principles which could be transposed across regions and climates (Summerson 1980). The Italian Renaissance gradually shaped approaches to architecture throughout the rest of Europe. Leon Battista Alberti (1452) produced a re-interpretation of Vitruvius’s *Ten Books*, re-connecting classicism with its Roman interpretation. This was one of the earliest architectural pattern books, with text in both English and Italian. The mode of recording and representing

architectural style, assisted the rise in popularity of the early neo-classical styles within Europe (Whatkin 2011).

Many publications on the subject of architecture and regionalism regard the 18th Century as being the period in which regionalism and regionalist thought really emerges. It is also linked with the idea of architecture as a profession, as well as the development of architectural history as worthy of academic study. It is legibility in the preservation of historic buildings, which shaped the study of the monumental. For artists, historians and architects, the ability to observe buildings of antiquity in Italy and Greece, assisted in developing a chronology and interpretation of architecture which was rooted in the classical. New interpretations of classical architecture offered a clearly definable set of architectural principles, which provided a strong basis from which buildings could be designed (Whatkin 2011).

Whilst the adoption of the neoclassical aesthetic in the rest of Europe was far from immediate, by the end of the Renaissance in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, its use was widespread (van Eck 2003).



Figure 1.4: Banqueting House, London, reflecting the Palladian style of Inigo Jones (london architecture. info 2015).

The adoption of classical architecture in the Renaissance and its long standing use in a majority of Europe, is indicative of its appeal. It is an architectural system and codification which enables designers to standardise and replicate elements. Architecture has been referred to as a language by historians, theorists and practitioners, and the study of classical vocabulary provide a commonly understood means of architectural expression. It offers a means of repetition and replication,

and a type of standardisation. This provided construction that could be read and understood by all building trades, through a unified set of ideas; which encouraged standardisation within projects. In Britain, these qualities have been exploited in the mass production of housing (Powers 2007).

Regional expression can be found in the interpretation of neoclassical styles and is primarily associated with religion. The Baroque was widely adopted in Catholic

countries, as an ornate expression of the church's power. In contrast more literal and pared down interpretations of classical architecture were generally favoured in those countries that were Protestant. This is particularly the case in England during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries, where an English Baroque included works by Christopher Wren, Nicholas Hawksmoor and John Vanbrugh (Colquhoun 2002). Another pared down classical aesthetic had emerged in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century; inspired by Andrea Palladio's pattern books and termed English Palladianism (Summerson 1980). This aesthetic was pioneered by Inigo Jones and came to shape attitudes towards the neoclassical until the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The design of the Banqueting House, Whitehall London in 1622 (Figure 1.4) is a more understated approach to the interpretation of classical architecture than is found in Continental Europe (Pevsner 1990). The adoption of neoclassical architecture in England influenced the development of the terraced house, which by the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century expressed the ability to replicate and standardise the classical principles of rhythm and proportion through the mass-production of building elements. It is this approach



that could be perceived as a form of universalisation and a move away from what might be perceived as regional domestic architecture (Colquhoun 1997 pp.13-23). In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries, Neoclassical architecture had taken on its own identity and responses in different countries, and into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, many Modernist architects produced neoclassical schemes at the start of their careers. This included Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, Gunnar Asplund and Walter Gropius. What is distinct about the use of classical architecture is the variety afforded by its principles, with varied approaches to design in different regions. The classicism of Gunnar Asplunds an example, rejecting the ornament of National Romantic styles and instead like early Modernists, creating new expression through proportion, scale and form.

#### 1.4.3 Retrospective Regionalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

Notions of national and political identity were particularly prominent in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It is within this period that nations such as Germany and Italy were unified and other countries were striving for independence. It is in England that there was first seen a renewed interest

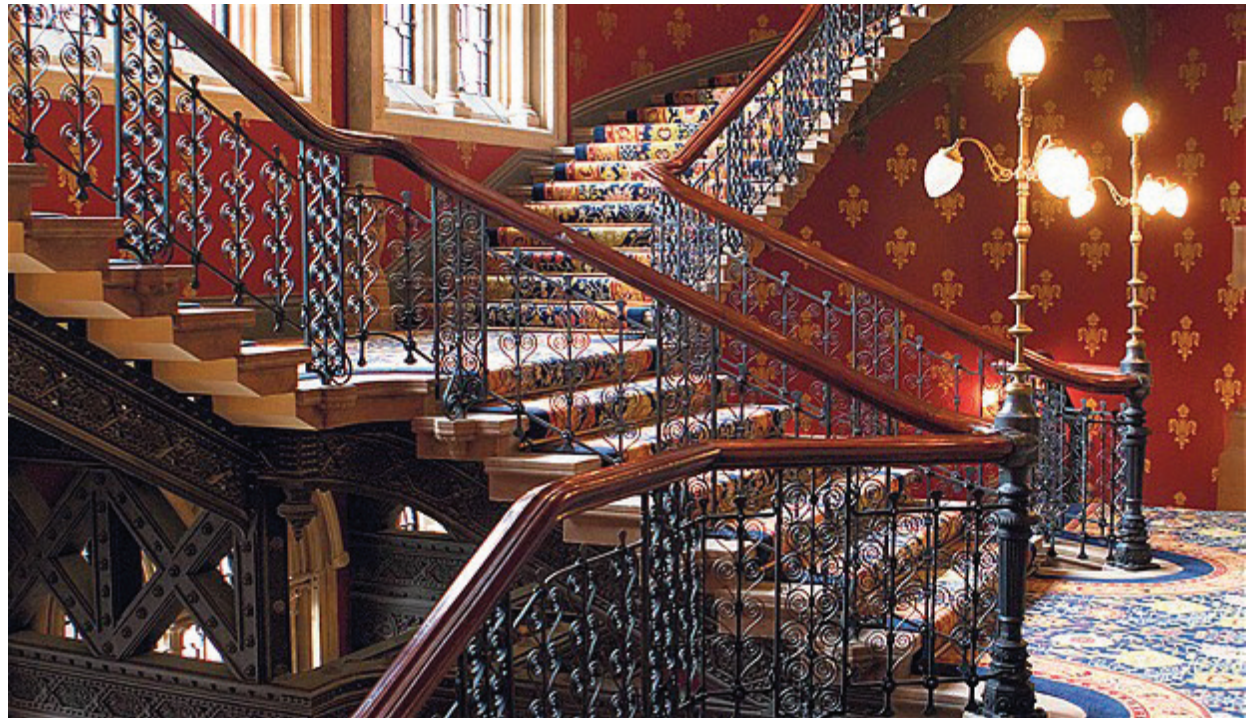


Figure 1.5: Cast iron staircase in the Midland Grand Hotel, London (Telegraph 2011).

with the past, in an attempt to express ideas of collective and national identity. The Gothic revival that emerged in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Britain, was key to the re-engagement of nations with concepts of nationhood and identity. It is the influence of the picturesque in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, from which Gothic revival architecture was founded; mirroring movements in literature, poetry and art, away from classical conventions towards a reinterpretation of cultural and national pasts (Brown 2001). This influenced

the reframing of the past in terms of the cultural and political environments in other European societies. Much of this reinterpretation was against the backdrop of technological progress and societal change. It is the balance between the modern and historic that separated the Gothic revival from the neoclassical. The work of George Gilbert Scott in the 1870s, reflects not only a reverence for the past, but a re-imagining of it, with cast iron technological expression of its time (Figure 1.5). The grand staircase of





Figure 1.6: Red House, Philip Webb, the form of which imitates roof pitches and openings found in pre industrial architectural forms (victorianweb.org 2010).

the Midland Grand Hotel is an example of the unification of past and present, in a similar manner the cast iron Gothic of Viollet-le-Duc, which paved the way for French Art Nouveau. This is important as it distinguishes the use of elements and ornament of past architectural styles from mere pastiche or sentimentality, instead combining them with the most current development of construction technology. This is exemplified by Cragside House, completed in 1863. Designed by Richard Norman Shaw, it fused ideas of

the Medieval Gothic Vernacular with the latest technologies, incorporating hydroelectricity to power installations of electrically powered devices, from rotisseries to light bulbs. Hydroelectric power was also harnessed to operate a lift within the property (Madsen 1980).

It is during this period that there was also a move in emphasis in architectural theory from the monumental to an engagement with architecture at domestic level. Re-assessment of what was termed the

Vernacular, re-enforced the link between language and architecture; inferring locality and dialectical difference (Lewis 2002, Baines and Brooks 1999). This re-engagement with the domestic occurs alongside the expansion of many urban centres in Europe, with the combination of the past and contemporary development. A different reaction to industrialization emerges in the 1850s which is more directly linked to the past and pre-industrial notions of building and craft. The design of Red House (Figure 1.6) by Philip Webb for William Morris is representative of a more literal interpretation of the past. It was in essence the first architectural expression of the Arts & Crafts movement, embodying many of Morris's political and philosophical ideas (Cumming 1991).

It expressed a move away from mass production and industrialization, towards a more traditional way of producing both design and construction; embracing the work of the hand, as opposed to the work of the machine. It was the spread of influence of this movement and the many artists, designer and architects who aligned themselves to it, that would prove most influential (Dixon 1978).

Although the Arts & Crafts movement did not receive its title until 1887, the work of Morris and Webb signified a conscious rejection of manufacture and mass production. John Ruskin, who was pivotal in the theoretical development of the Gothic Revival was a great influence on Morris and Webb in their development of the Arts & Crafts. It was Ruskin's ideas about technology and the division of labour, in terms of the loss of craft skills and increases in mass production that was arguably most significant; along with the notion that artistic expression was the means by which a nation truly expressed its current state and national character (Cumming 1991).

While the Gothic Revival had celebrated craft and tradition, it had also embraced manufacture and technology. Morris, Webb and other architects associated with the Arts & Crafts movement, favoured an approach to architecture which was firmly rooted in the craft tradition; drawing upon vernacular and medieval architecture. It is in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century that the emphasis on craft in architecture and notions of vernacular were beginning to be expressed in a number of countries. There were also multi-disciplined societies and groups influenced by the Arts and Crafts, dealing

with architecture not in isolation, but as part of a more comprehensive movement; signifying a holistic approach to living accommodation. What is common between both movements is an expression of identity through the use of past techniques, but while the Gothic Revival engaged with the monumentality of ecclesiastical architecture, the Arts & Crafts Movement re-established a connection with domestic architecture (Pevsner 1991).

#### **1.4.4 National Romantic Movements and Proto Modernism**

The many national and regional vocabularies which appeared at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century can be viewed as expressions of nationalism, but also as expressions of identity and culture. Many of these vocabularies were derived from the generation of borders, as expressions of independence from foreign rule. This was certainly the case with Czechoslovakia, Finland and Catalonia as an assertion of independence from Spain, all of which have a large proportion of national romantic architecture. Assertion of cultural identity in this period was closely linked with linguistic and regional identity. Czechoslovakia, Finland and Catalonia, can all be seen as regions within wider

empires. All possess distinct cultures and languages, which have been seen to react against larger and more dominant powers. Activities linked with language, tradition and the arts forged national, regional and local identities. Culquhoun (2007 pp.141-145), differentiates approaches, seeing Western Europe rooted in the medievalism of German romanticism; while Finland's response conveys the primitive essence of the Finnish landscape. Concepts of architectural design within these countries could be seen as more complex, with elements of medievalism giving way to aspects of form and detail which are precursors to Modernism, particularly within Germany and Britain (Curtis 1996).

English engagement with the past in forging new architectural expressions such as Gothic Revival and Arts & Crafts, were closely associated with revivalism. In contrast it is the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh that can be seen as influencing more profound changes in aesthetics. Mackintosh's designs include elements which can be seen in the traditional architecture of Scotland, such as historic fortifications and rural buildings. It is the pared down treatment of surface and ornament which make his buildings unique in this period.





Figure 1.7: Blackwell House (1998-2000), Ballie Scott, the gable and projected bay window are elements which share a simplicity with early Modernism (viewfromhebb.wordpress.com 2016).

The influence of Mackintosh's association with Ballie Scott can be seen in Mackintosh's Hill House and Scott's Blackwell House (Figure 1.7), as both reference and abstract elements of historic architecture; with aspects of these designs which can be viewed as proto-modernist (Pevsner 1968).

In Germany at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, there was an engagement with British styles amongst artists, architects and designers. Studio Magazine and

similar British publications were widely distributed, as were German publications such as *Jugendstil* (Young Style). The title of this publication alluding to the desire for Modernism and a new literature in the arts and design. Colquhoun (1997) states both Germany and Britain had engaged with the medieval in more literal terms. This had occurred at an earlier point in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century compared to the other countries. This cultural exchange of ideas and practice had occurred in

the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, but is perhaps reflected best by Mathusius (1905) and the publication of *The English House*. Examining British domestic design at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, he makes great note that the English are obsessed with house and home and makes reference to the Englishman's home being his castle, reinforcing connections within Britain of home and status (Powers and Von Sternberg 2007).

With national romantic styles giving way to a more forward looking architectural language, it is the confluence of societal and technological change which shapes both national romantic and Modernist approaches. Peter Behrens' AEG Turbine Hall 1908-9 (Figure 1.8), is expressive of an industrial aesthetic, utilizing both traditional and modern materials (Curtis 1996). There is also a greater emphasis placed upon light. Adolf Loos's Steiner House in Vienna is expressive of the interrelatedness of solid, void, mass and plane and a rejection of surface ornament (Pevsner 1991). Ease of travel and communication assisted in the sharing of ideas as well as identity within a more technological unified world. This raises questions about how society lives, operates and deals with technological change and how it can be tailored to



Figure 1.8: Peter Behrens AEG Turbine Hall (1908-9) (architectural 2015).

enhance the everyday and assist in creating more advanced accommodation for living (Wilson 2007).

What is important about these movements, is that they consciously emerge as a means of localized expression, as statements of shared culture and built manifestations of identity. To dismiss the romantic movements as simply nationalistic is to underestimate the cultural and political circumstances that produced the variety found in the late 19th and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. To dismiss these



Figure 1.9: Eliel Saarinen, Helsinki Central Station (1919), whilst expressing elements of Finnish culture and its engagement with the world.

movements is to miss the point that such localised expressions had occurred within Europe in such variety for a substantial period of time. While they can be seen as individual, they are also part of a wider more connected world. For example, the influence of the Beaux-Arts movement in America can be seen in the work of Eliel Saarinen in Finland (Figure 1.9), with a shared root in the educational approaches of the Beaux-Arts School in Paris. In a similar respect, the influence of British Arts & Crafts can be found in the work of

Adolf Loos. As Powers (2007) observes, early commentators of the development of Modernism were quick to point out the similarities with the national British form of Georgian terraces and squares, which were evident from 1750-1820. Although significantly influenced by classicism, the conscious avoidance of ornament, created tidy and unified street scenes. These movements took a great deal of inspiration from historic and vernacular expression, and ornament which make many of his designs distinctive.



however they were never rooted in a specific location. What Arts & Crafts attempted to create, was the impression of a past world, in a similar manner to National Romantic movements and to marry this approach with contemporary approaches to design and construction (Curtis 1996).

### **1.5 Modernism and Internationalism**

The introduction of Modernism in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, attracted criticism due to a perceived lack of contextualisation; along with its lack of immediately recognisable national or more localised features. Modernism was in part a reaction to the national romantic movements, which grew during the First World War. Given the impact of the War, there was also a desire to provide greater equality in society, with varied interpretations in different countries (Harvey 1991). In post-war Europe, this provided inspiration for new approaches to architecture, many of which were influenced by the Bauhaus. New architectural forms were seen as a way of breaking down national and social boundaries. The rejection of ornament cannot simply be read as a rejection of nationalism (Powers 2007). Nevertheless, it can be seen as is a rejection of the outward ostentation of the bourgeois,

along with a change in attitudes towards expression of form over ornament. Whilst many Modernist schemes were designed for middle and upper class clients, they served as a testing ground for new ideas about dwelling along with wider goals of urban planning (Wilk 2009).

The International Style has become the focus of much of the debate surrounding Modernism and place. The term was coined by Hitchcock and Johnson (1932), for an exhibition of European architecture at the Museum of Modern Art New York. It was Hitchcock and Johnson who set out the criteria for inclusion in this exhibition using three principles: the expression of volume rather than mass, the emphasis on balance rather than preconceived symmetry, and the expulsion of applied ornament. It was as a result of this exhibition and the selection criteria that many perspectives on Modernism were formed (Wilson 2007). The work exhibited by leading European Modernist architects, represented varied responses to architectural design. This was contrasted with the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, which was intended to be more representative of a distinct American identity (McCarter 1997). What the title of this exhibition espouses is the idea that

all Modernism is somehow universal and implies the absence of local expression. This is supported by Elizabeth Mock's (1947) interpretation of the exhibition as being misrepresentative of European architecture at the time. As a result of this exhibition that many architects became inextricably linked with Modernism. Like other post-rationalisation by critics or historians a label is given, which none of the architects involved had any notion about when actually designing the buildings.

From the 1930s, there was a subtle re-engagement with what American architecture should be, with the Prairie Style in particular being cited as American and Modern. The rediscovery of Haratio Greenhough's (1836) writings on architecture were pivotal in this reassessment, often wrongly attributed with the term form follows function. Greenhough (1947) was writing about an American interpretation of the many European styles. Since Colonisation, American Architecture had been constantly adapted so that it was not reliant on imported styles. Like Greenhough, Lewis Mumford became synonymous with ideas of architecture and identity in America. Influenced by Greenhough, Mumford



(1941) presented a lecture entitled *The South in Architecture*, which analysed the many reinterpretations of European Architecture in the New World, including amendments derived from the varied conditions found in North America.

Homer's *Odyssey*, is used by Mumford (1941), to explain his concept, that not all universal culture is bad. His case is made by explaining the joy to be had in reading the *Odyssey* irrespective of location, background and ethnicity. The argument is that Modernism was derived from a complex European dialogue with a wide variety of influences and localised approaches. It was brought to America through international networks of architects, critics and theorists from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century onwards, and the immigration of Modernists such as Marcel Breuer and Conrad Schindler. They primarily created Modernist housing for the expanding middle classes, tailoring them to American environments and culture (Figure 1.10). In the same sense, Frank Lloyd Wright's interpretations of Modernism, e.g. *Falling Water* 1935 can perhaps be seen in a similar manner viewed as Modernism through the lens of American culture and society (Handlin 2004).



Figure 1.10: Marcel Breuer, Robinson House (1947), representative of European modernism adapted for American taste, but also the American landscape (commons.mtholyoke.edu 2015).

### 1.5.1 A Call for Regionalist Architecture

Towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, an architectural theory related to regionalism was developed. Strongly influenced by the work of Mumford (1941) and Ricouer (1965), the concept of 'critical regionalism' links local culture and the built environment. However, at the time, it was claimed that international connectivity, trade and business was homogenising culture, with the local being replaced by the international.

Homogenisation of form and style, was interpreted as being a product of replication, through manufacture and standardisation. It was alongside a growing body of research in the early 1980s into the effects of 'Globalization' on society and culture that Critical Regionalism appeared, as a call to establish a more regional response to architectural design (Frampton 1983). The work of Lefauvre and Tzonis (1981) first explored these ideas to counter the notion of placeslessness, in their paper entitled 'The Grid and the Pathway. This



Figure 1.11: Dimitris Pikionis, Landscaping of the Acropolis (1954-1957) a key influence on the development of Critical Regionalism (eriettaattali.com 2015).

explored the work of Dimitris Pikionis and his recently completed scheme to enhance the landscape around the Parthenon (Figure 1.11). Tzonis and Lefaivre (1981), perceived it to be a contemporary project which directly linked architecture, culture, history and landscape without resorting to historicism. Their work explored the roots of regional architecture based on Tzonis's nationality. The early emphasis of many of the ideas developed, were based upon notions of region within Greek architecture. Using the Kantian

principle of critical in combination with regionalism, it was their aim to assert a more analytical approach to regional architecture (Eggner 2002).

The distinction between region and the reproduction of vernacular, acknowledging the danger of pastiche, was a clear assertion. Critical regionalism would be a form of resistance to the universalisation of culture. Their theoretical perspective was linked to ideas of a decentralised approach to governance and society;

at odds with the remote dictat of policy makers and developers (Tzonis & Lefaivre 2004). What emerged were two branches of Critical Regionalism, that of Tzonis and Lefaivre and the work of Kenneth Frampton. Whilst Lefaivre and Tzonis can be seen as the pioneers of the theoretical approach, it is perhaps Kenneth Frampton who is most associated with its theoretical standpoint.

Frampton (1983) published *Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance*, along with *Prospects for a Critical Regionalism* in 1987. His approach is possibly more confrontational than that of Tzonis and Lefaivre's, and his interpretation of critical regionalism and the universalization of architecture, quotes Paul Ricoeur; *Universal Civilisation and National Cultures* (1961). Based on Ricour (1965), Frampton describes an architecture of resistance rejecting what was seen as nationalist or historical styles but also rejecting post-modern architecture, which he dismisses as scenography and pure technique. It is Frampton (2008) who perhaps comes closest to clarifying architectural notions, in his ideas of designing a building, using topography as opposed to simply bulldozing a site



flat. There were also discussions about architectonics, with respect to the construction and junctions of a building; sharing similarities with Adolf Loos (1910) and the ideas of honesty in material and construction proposed in *Ornament and Crime*.

Adopting the aesthetics of a particular time invariably ties the product to a limited lifespan and ornament detracts from the material and means of construction. In selecting projects, identified as critical regionalist architecture by both Frampton (1983, 1987) and Tzonis and Lefaivre (1981, 2006), many of the buildings are designed by established and renowned architects. In essence, the focus is on statement buildings, and individual commissions not representative of the locality or region, but representative of individual responses by those prominent within the architectural profession. While projects in both branches of critical regionalism are drawn from around the world, there is little engagement with the social, cultural and historic contexts in which the architects were designing; Frampton's evaluation of Barragan (Figure 1.12), being a case in point. There is little acknowledgement of the complexities of Mexico in terms of identity and culture;



Figure 1.12: Luis Barragán, San Cristóbal (1968) whilst referencing Pueblo architecture, there is clearly a strong influence of North American Modernism (nyt.com 2013).

and no real engagement with the cultural, social, political and environmental conditions. Barragán himself refers to his work as autobiographical which alludes to an individual response (Eggerner 2002).

Jacobs (1996) also points to critical regionalism creating an imperialist nostalgia, that defines the colonisers as always engaged in conscious work against the indigenous. In this she is stating that it is the imposition of the ideas of a few, which seeks to address

localised circumstance. The architectural precedents that are used by both Frampton and Tzonis and Lefaivre, are rarely designed with critical regionalism in mind. Much like the focus of Western architectural history, critical regionalism is a continuation of classical approaches to Western Architecture; concentrating on the exceptional or monumental, as opposed to engaging with more mundane but widespread architectural practice (Rudofsky 1964). What critical regionalism fails to do, is clearly define

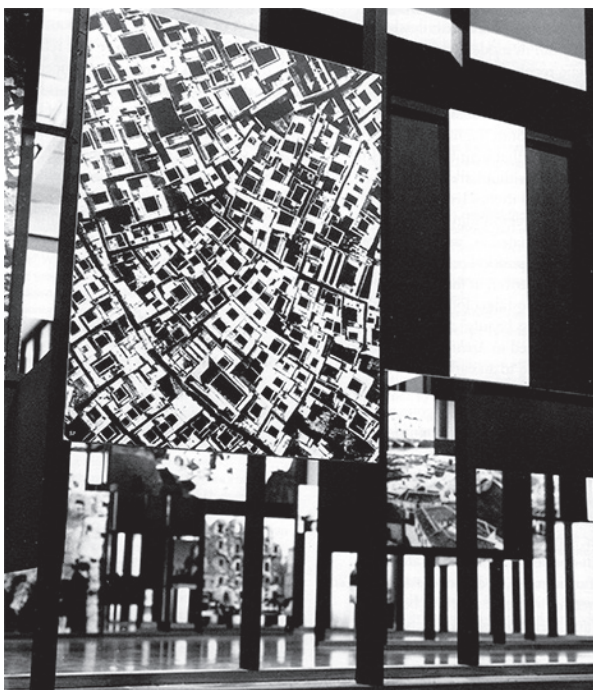


Figure 1.13: A still from the 'Architecture without Architects' at MoMA, c1964-65 (transculturalmodernism.com 2014).

what it is opposing, as there is no real explanation of what universal architecture may be, while there are selected examples of what critical regionalist architecture is (Eggner 2002).

## 1.6 Quantifying Universal Architecture

Repetition within architecture can be seen in the modern era with the reassessment of classical architecture; i.e. buildings that can be found with similar forms and aesthetic, irrespective of location. The

debate surrounding ideas of universality became evident in the 1960s. Questions were asked in Europe, with regard to how a regional emphasis could be placed on architecture are markedly different to those asked in post-war America. In 'Architecture without Architects', Rudofsky (1964), states that Architectural

History, as written and taught in the Western World, has never been concerned with more than a few select cultures. Architecture from the Renaissance until the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in Europe had been predominantly preoccupied with the architecture of the Classical World. This publication ran concurrent with an exhibition of the same title at MoMA in New York (Figure 1.13). It was highly influential in raising questions about the nature of architecture; for instance - Do similar approaches to construction in particular dwellings exist within other cultures? There is also the undercurrent of early environmentalism, in which Rudofsky (1964) states that the cave is perhaps the earliest form of dwelling and may possibly turn out to be our last form of dwelling. There is also the question raised of what is considered primitive architecture, which also extends back to the Classical World and can be seen as

a derogatory term implicit of a lack of sophistication by Western standards. Also the use of the exotic within architectural history and theory can be deemed as alien and curious. Pointing out that there has been little cohesive study of these architectural concepts in the Western World, and what has been studied actually resides in other disciplines such as anthropology. This was set against educational practices within schools of architecture and planning that were still firmly rooted in a Classical interpretation of architectural history, but with the principles of Modernism overlaid upon it.

Rudofsky's (1964) companion to the exhibition was particularly influential on the work of Paul Oliver's (1969), *Shelter and Society* which examined not only what is termed as vernacular, but also found that architecture emerging from many schools was inspired by the Modernism of Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe among others. It is perhaps a reinterpretation of the ideas of Modernism distilled some decades before, in which the idea of universal architecture is apparent. The notion of Fordism had been utilised to great effect in America during the Second World War, with standardization of product being central. Whilst members of

the Modern Movement sought to embrace elements of industrial production, it was designers associated with the Movement that brought about schemes that were a wider appropriation of Modernism as an efficient and financially viable means of development (Millar 1987). Fordism and Modernism were combined to create more universal building solutions, which lacked the individual character of a specific architect designing and implementing a particular development. Companies with groups of architects and technicians began to deliver variations of standardized buildings, which made use of available technology. This is an echo of Britain 250 years earlier with the replication of terraced housing typologies (Powers 2007).

Materiality in mass production and the repetition of form may be key to the notion that architecture is no longer about place but is universal. The use of concrete, glass and steel is inextricably linked with mass production and uniformity. Ricour (1965) reacted to what he stated as a single world civilisation and the challenge of adapting cultural heritage to new globalized products and ideas. Writing in the 17th Century, Pascal (1995) states that “the whole of mankind can be looked upon

as one single man, who constantly learns and remembers”. This can be interpreted as - all people when faced with similar challenges and similar knowledge, have the potential to arrive at similar solutions. Given the fact that the world is more interconnected, communication has advanced so much that if an invention is made somewhere in the world, it will spread everywhere. The dichotomy which is presented by Ricour (1965) is - how to become modern and return to sources; and how to revive an old dormant civilization and take part in universal civilization. It is Ricour (1965) who highlights the growth of consumerism and standardization as being key to profit and the global viability of a product.

Engagement with region in America is in the work of Greenough (1966), as an attempt to establish a means of architectural expression which is redolent of American culture. This is similar to the movements which arose in Europe which ask similar questions of identity and its representation within architecture and the arts. It is with the spread of Modernism and the expansion of Fordism into many aspects of industry and culture in America that the questions of architecture and identity are again re-framed. The post-war

climate of consumerism and capitalism that begins to dominate not only American society but also globally, raises again the question of identity within this new and more interconnected global phenomenon. The proliferation of uniform built forms which carries with it associations of Modernism are seen to dilute ideas of location and identity, through uniformity and the material vocabulary of mass produced building, (Moran 2005).

### **1.7 England and Modernism**

Much of the literature on region and regionalism have been focused upon international architecture, examining projects in a wide variety of contexts and cultures. It is for this reason that there needs to be a specific section on England as a means of situating the investigation of regionalism in architecture. England's engagement with Modernism, was essentially limited to the post-war period and its wider use in social housing and public building. Before the Second World War, there were still notions of traditional domestic architecture that had been associated with the Arts & Crafts (Powers and Von Sternberg 2007). Housing was firmly rooted in English rural typologies and echoed sentiments of a romanticism





Figure 1.14: A typical 1930s semi-detached house, which by design is implicit of a unified whole. Playing on notions of traditional aesthetic and ideas of status.

of the past as a means of architectural expression. The most widespread typology in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, was the semi-detached house (Figure 1.14), used for both social and private housing (Lewis 2014). A semi-detached property offered privacy and the appearance of a larger, statelier dwelling when viewed as a pair. The steep roof pitches mirror the amended medieval style which inspired Arts & Crafts architecture. The primary differences between social and private housing were material specification, level of ornament and size.

Despite being universal, as semi-detached properties can be found throughout England, they are still representative of more localised design responses (Kuchta 2010).

There is reticence in the inter-war period in the adoption of Modernist housing. It is not until after the Second World War that Modernism and interpretations of it, become key to infrastructure, civic and domestic design. Modernism was perceived as a viable approach to

dealing with housing shortages and meeting requirements for high density social housing. Modernist developments occurred at all scales in post-war Britain, from the development of New Towns to local authority building. Visions emerged in this period of a more egalitarian society, in part shaped by Modernism and the possibilities it offered in terms of planning and design. A building program was enacted in the post-war period, based upon interpretations of international Modernism, the primary focus being social housing and slum clearance. What occurred was a widespread engagement with these issues by British architects, and schemes like Park Hill in Sheffield exemplified the ability for Modernism to replace the slum housing of back to backs which had previously inhabited the site, introducing high density housing solutions and exemplifying the Modernist idea of streets in the skies.

Modernism became widely employed by many local authorities, in part due to high levels of subsidy offered by central government. This led to schemes throughout Britain. By the end of the 1960s with the proliferation of Modernist housing schemes, it was falling out of favour. Its use in large scale social housing

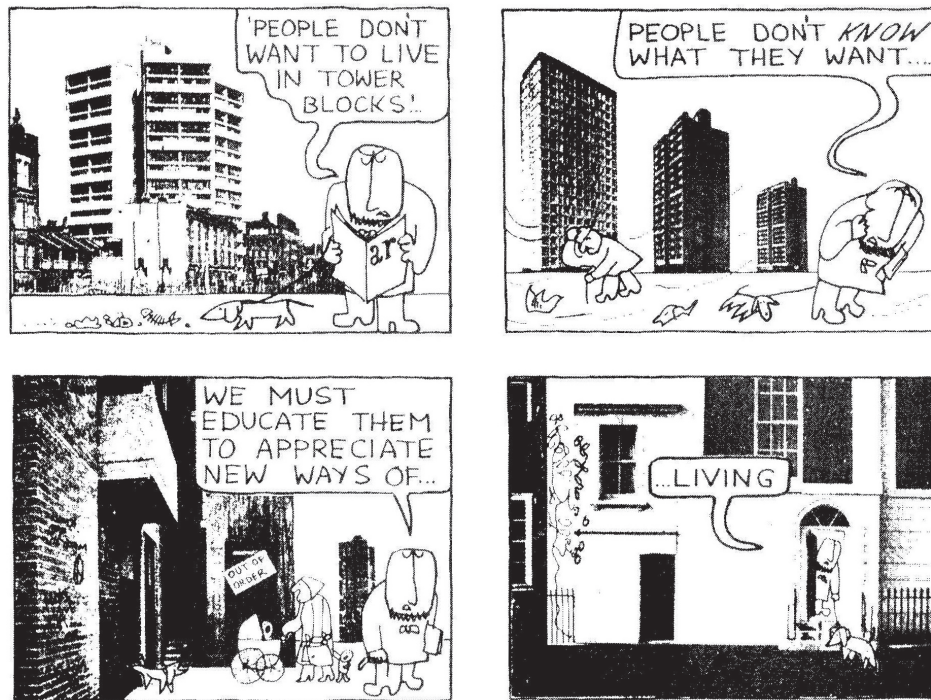


Figure 1.15: Louis Hellman cartoon for (Architectural Review 1968). Highlighting the disconnect between architects and planners with the needs of the public.

developments had meant it acquired connotations with social housing, making it less desirable to the private market (Hanley 2012), while the local authority schemes had accrued a catalogue of technical and social failures. By the early 1970s, protests against Modernist style developments were widespread, with a steady flow of cartoons appearing in *Architectural Review* by Louis Hellman (Figure 1.15), reflecting thought within the profession and public perception of it. He highlighted the lack of foresight in large

Modernist developments, with regard to the substantial maintenance required, the amount of anti-social behaviour in shared spaces, and lack of amenities. Hellman (1967) also reflected the growing view of architects as technocrats, by picturing an architect designing a tower block for the masses; then returning home to a comfortable georgian terrace. The social stigma which had been associated with Modernist social housing, was starting to be physically apparent, all of which added to public mistrust.

## 1.8 Anglicised Modernism

From the 1950s in Britain, a domestic architecture appeared that combined Modernism with elements of what appeared to be vernacular architecture. The term now associated with these housing developments is Neo Vernacular, whilst sometimes incorporating Modernist ideas, they were presented through a more localised lens. Reflecting local vernacular elements such as form and finishes, it softened the hard lines associated with Modernism and reflected a more English interpretation of domestic architecture.

This form of Modernism can be seen as starting with architects Taylor and Green, about whom Nicolas Pevsner (1962) used the term postmodern. The work of Peter Aldington and Colin St John Wilson were also expressive of a move towards a type of design that was more reflective of rural England. Neo vernacular started in the South East of England, primarily in Cambridgeshire, Buckinghamshire and Essex; and was mainly confined to small private developments. They referenced local vernacular features such as tile hanging, pitched roofs and integrated use of timber (Powers 2009). The work of Eric Lyons is particularly significant. He





Figure 1.16: SPAN house which would become ubiquitous in both private and social developments, widely imitated without the care and attention to detail (themodernhouse.net 2015).

developed a contemporary but vernacular-influenced aesthetic which was widely imitated in domestic architecture. He used tile hung façades, coloured brickwork, and large horizontal window casements. The use of tile hung façades were originally a reference to vernacular in the South East of England (Figure 1.16).

Widespread Modernist development in Essex prompted a new approach to more sympathetic forms of development. What emerged was the Essex Design

Guide (1973), which sought to temper development with guidance on architectural language and traditions along with appropriate planning and landscaping. What is significant about the guide is that it sought in practical terms to influence development within Essex, towards more considered contextual designs (Carmona 2002). The Guide was driven by both public reactions to new development and concerns within local government, with regard to loss identity in Essex towns and villages. Previously,

residential development in the county had been no different to any other part of the country. The Essex Design Guide advocated a local vocabulary. It was a coherent and legible combination of contextual analysis and contemporary planning theory, delivered to clients in a single volume. It could be referenced and was intended to create more sympathetic approaches to architecture and planning in Essex. The design guide concept became widely used by many local authorities, primarily within the context of market towns and villages (Cullingworth 1999).

The significance is that, design guidance offers a manual for development which is specific to a locality, in a manner that had not existed before. Design guides can be seen as a pragmatic response to issues of local identity in architecture. They were also a reaction to widespread and unsympathetic development in the 1960s; and followed the tradition of the pattern book. The focus was on tempering ubiquitous residential development and encouraging responses which are more tailored to location. What design guidance lacks is the jurisdiction to enforce such approaches. Interpretations and reinterpretations of the Essex Design Guide have perhaps contributed to a more



literal approach to design (Carmona 2002). For example, Noak Bridge in Basildon completed in 1975, can be viewed as a literal reading of the illustrations found within the Guide, which in turn can be read as assemblages of traditional architectural characteristics found in Essex. It is almost the inevitability of pastiche due to the prescriptive nature of design guidance that has attracted criticism. This was particularly communicated through the illustration and graphical content, which showed vernacularised interpretations in the design of new houses (Colquhoun 2008). During the early 1970s, by contrast, Architects such as Aldington, Craig and Collinge, were delivering schemes that referenced local building traditions, but were still contemporary (Powers 2007).

## **1.9 Conclusion**

In examining regionalism and regional architecture, it is apparent that the variation between regions, identification and further classification in the present has become difficult to define. Conversely the notion of universal architecture is easier to identify, with increasing standardisation, irrespective of region. The result has been a loss of identity through design strategies that are not context driven.

The use of standardised materials and structural systems for efficiency and cost effectiveness, contribute to the notion of the universal (Barlow 1997). Whilst regional architecture should draw on the present, many new housing developments associate with the past, in order to reflect regional or local characteristics. Moreover, regional character cannot exist within a global structure, as a regional understanding of society and culture must take place to understand the context in which domestic architecture is being created (Colquhoun 1996). It is a lack of focus on contextual interpretation that makes architectural responses ubiquitous. Without a concerted focus on a specific place, the nuances of climate, culture, and materiality cannot be sufficiently explored. In addition, building typologies need more specific attention, as regionalism should be read as more than form and aesthetics (Curtis 1996). Region is difficult to define, by definition it is a area this research needs to be fixed within geographic area in which cultural and political forces can shape its existence. It is also possible that in a given region there can be different factors which shape more localised responses.

## *2.0 Vernacular Architecture & Region*

## **2.0 Vernacular Architecture and Region**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The exploration of Region and Regionalism has demonstrated that the research should focus on specific geographic and/or cultural settings. It has also shown that the trend from localised response to mass production has diluted the notion of regionalism. In order to develop the concept of houses that are regionally responsive, it is important to examine the vernacular, which is perceived as the indigenous representation of a locality. The vernacular is primarily pre-industrial construction. In terms of architecture, it is therefore essentially agricultural and residential. By contrast, the study of architecture is often centred upon the monumental and work of identifiable individuals, as opposed to a less formal approach to building design. Yet, the formal architecture that has dominated the study of architectural history, is only representative of a small proportion of buildings constructed (AL Sayyad 2006). The term vernacular is borrowed from linguistics, referring to a localised language or dialect. The word itself stems from the Latin, *vernaculus*, meaning native, indigenous and domestic.

The first use of vernacular in architectural analysis can be attributed to, Rudofsky (1964), influenced by the linguistic work of Noam Chomsky. Vernacular can be seen as the existing architecture of a particular region, situated within its own environment. The referencing of vernacular in contemporary architectural schemes, is often used to validate impositions upon historical contexts. There is an argument that the vernacular has been used to assert local responsiveness as a means of reducing local opposition and appeasing development control planners (Maudlin pp. 51-63 2009).

### **2.2 Vernacular Study**

The study of vernacular architecture in England has its roots the picturesque movement of the 18th Century. The cottage form, which had previously been associated with the poor and peasantry came to represent homeliness and comfort (Burke 2009). This engagement with less formal architectural expression was derived from rural buildings. Architects associated with the Arts & Crafts Movement, referenced many of these vernacular elements in their domestic architecture. With changing attitudes to what had been previously perceived as

humble pre industrial typologies, the study of traditional building emerges. Interest in archaeology and the development of antiquarian societies, encouraged the study of vernacular architecture. Vernacular study was formalised in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, with the publication of Innocent's (1916) *English Building Construction*. This was the first book to engage comprehensively with the development and distribution of vernacular typologies and the role of the craftsman in their design and construction. The study and classification of these traditional building types emerged initially from an antiquarian approach (Johnson 1993).

The early 20<sup>th</sup> Century studies primarily focussed on construction and ornament, identifying regional variation and establishing areas in which certain characteristics are shared. What emerged from the use of vernacular as a term, was a linking of architecture and language. Interpreting architecture as a language infers local architectural nuances, with different languages being reflected architecturally; as the production of place (Pavlidis 1991). By association, this links with region and culture. Pavlidis (1991) interprets the archaeological methodology applied to buildings, as folkloric. It is

reliant on classifying all houses in a region, by plan, appearance and other physical characteristics. The primary differentiation between types is based on form, material and construction. The classification of vernacular typologies took place at the expense of wider contextual analysis, with the focus of many studies being placed on identification; as opposed to cultural and historical context. Brunskill (1971) is one of the first attempts at addressing, recording and identifying regional variation. It is also credited as broadening the appeal of vernacular study as an academic discipline. Within this work, the limitations of typological analysis are not fully acknowledged. However, to develop vernacular identification, the introduction of what is termed the polite threshold is used to help further define the vernacular (Figure 2.1).

This threshold works on the basis that some attempt has been made by those who have constructed the buildings, to follow rudimentary proportional systems and aesthetic rules, although not as formally as would be undertaken by architects. Vernacular relied on local knowledge and a localised approach to material and construction. It is Brunskill's (1971) work that offers the most comprehensive

THE 'POLITE' THRESHOLD

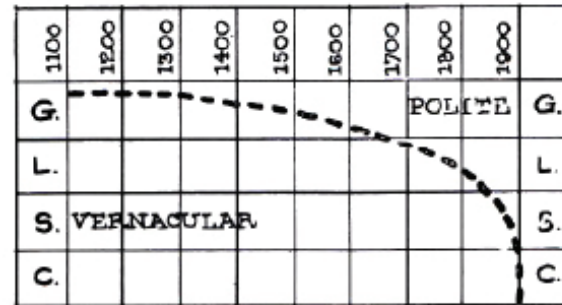


Figure 2.1; The polite threshold is an indication of the degree to which formalised building processes and design have been used. As with his other studies the letters correspond with Gloustershire, Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk (Brunskill 2001)

overview of vernacular architecture. It mirrors earlier efforts such as Innocent (1916), who introduced the term vernacular threshold, as a means of focusing on surviving structures. It makes the assumption that many of the buildings that did not survive were either poorly built dwellings, or were no longer fit for purpose and were therefore categorised as below the threshold. Whilst it is acknowledged that the surviving buildings may be a small proportion of the total, it still enables archaeologists to examine, record and process information regarding buildings that are no longer standing. This approach does not account for political, cultural and societal change as reasons

for demolition. Two major influences on the loss of many traditional buildings, were the 'Great Rebuilding' from the middle of the 16th Century up to 1640 (Hoskins, 1955). It was epitomised by a change from lightweight traditional building methods to stone and brick, which represented a perceived permanency. Barley (1961) identifies the other factor as the Great Fire of London (1666), which he termed 'the death of the vernacular tradition'. Between 1690 and 1725, new legislation created greater uniformity of construction. Increased industrialisation from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century was not evenly spread geographically. Ironically, the lack of permanent materials in areas such as the South East of England means that more of the vernacular buildings survived. In a practical sense, typological classification can only be undertaken on surviving buildings, but they may not be representative of what used to exist throughout the country. Thus a clear picture of the vernacular in England is difficult to ascertain (Green 2010).

### 2.3 Other Approaches to Vernacular Study

The broadening of vernacular study from the immediate locality is best illustrated

by the work of Rapoport (1969) and Oliver (1969), who were both initially influenced by Rudofsky (1964). Their approach was to explore vernacular architecture globally, examining different indigenous approaches to dwelling. These studies take into account aspects of culture and even belief systems, which go into the production of vernacular architecture in what could be termed a more anthropological approach to its investigation. They examined not only the buildings but also the cultures that created them, exploring symbolism of the development of houses and drawing appropriate responses to climate and material use. The same basic forms of vernacular buildings can be found in different geographical locations, with building developing over generations and refinements borrowed from other regions. This form of architecture is also shaped by trial and error, contributing to forms which are suited to the climate in which they are placed (Oliver 2007). Variations in vernacular architecture can be seen in terms of need, material availability, localised expertise; with its overall scale and embellishment being linked to status (Rapoport 1969).

Methods of vernacular study are also discussed by Pavlides (1991) and Rapoport

(1969), both being key to a wider and more pluralistic exploration of the vernacular, examining it globally rather than just locally. Much of the vernacular study in Britain is primarily based on historic building practices and examining the evidence of both existent and archaeological, to establish a picture of pre-industrialised domestic architecture. The work of Rapoport (1969) and Oliver (2007) can be seen as a more experiential reading of the subject. It differs by examining not only the historical, but all existent houses on a global scale. Paying closer attention to examining the contextual and cultural factors which generate vernacular expression. There is also an anomaly in terms of global study as industrialisation and urbanisation have progressed at different paces in different countries. In developed nations, there has been a clear move away from vernacular, towards ever increasing industrialised building practice. The work of Johnson (1993; 2010) accepts the conventions of typological classification as part of vernacular study in England, whilst engaging with a wider understanding of societal change and the presumed status of many of the buildings surveyed, generating ideas of status and class mobility in relation to traditional architecture, along

with creating a more informed overview of the development of traditional housing in England. This shares similarities with the work of Oliver (2007), introducing greater social, political and cultural insight into the examination of the subject.

## **2.4 Locating Vernacular**

Vernacular study in England, has primarily been influenced by an idea of establishing regions; in which an architectural language can be identified and attributed. Form, scale, plan and material, have been employed by many scholars to establish typologies and locate them. It has been argued that the vernacular in England is a study of the past, (Guillery 2011). Its remnants can be found in parts of many of the cities, towns and villages that are termed historic. Traces of many buildings that could be considered vernacular are present in varying degrees of preservation, from the untouched, to archaeological footprints (Figure 2.3). It is building an overall picture of distribution and type which becomes problematic in locating vernacular (Clifton-Taylor 1987). The classification of regional variation in timber building is particularly difficult, as there is a lack of existing physical evidence. This creates complications





Figure: 2.3 Penoyres map alludes to the distribution of vernacular types within England and Wales, however there is little consideration of age and degree of preservation within this. The use of stone superseding, timber clay & cob, geological factors aside, what this is then representative of is distribution of existing buildings at the time of the study (J & J Penoyre 1978)

in establishing what building types existed, in what concentrations they occurred and to what section of society they belonged. The identification and interpretation of vernacular building is important in regional terms, as it

represents a pre-industrial architectural response. Historically the study of vernacular architecture has focussed upon buildings that exist from the early medieval period, to those which pre-date the second industrial revolution. Yet, this could be challenged in regional terms, as the study of vernacular became formalised in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century; in the wake of architectural movements that borrowed heavily from past building practices. Knowledge of building prior to the medieval period has increased to an extent that the material evidence can provide a detailed picture of earlier regional building practices. Bradley (2012) examines the distribution and use of the round house, in relation to the adoption of rectilinear building forms in prehistory; focussing upon Europe and Scandinavia. A large proportion of this study follows Brunskill (1981), raising questions as to whether there is a distinction between vernacular study and archaeology. What is shared by studies of pre-industrial architecture is the difficulty in identifying, classifying and dating it. Whilst many advances have been made in particular with the use of ground penetrating radar and dendrochronology, timber vernacular is perhaps the most problematic to establish an overall patterns. It is also difficult to pinpoint

how localised particular expressions may be (Johnson 1993).

The increased use of brick and stone was initially related to geological distribution. Prior to the advent of mass transportation, selection was reliant on locally sourced and quarried materials, differentiating building appearance geographically. For instance, the distinctive red sandstone of Northern Cumbria (Figure 2.4), is an example of geology informing the local vernacular contributing to its distinctiveness (Brunskill 1974).



Figure 2.4 The distinctive red sandstone of Cumbria, in Kirkoswald, Eden Valley (viewpoints.org 2016).

It is however the interrelatedness of many of the properties of a building that differentiate it. In Northumberland the buildings have an innate sense of scale and proportion due to the origin of the stone used to construct them. Hadrian's Wall and other Roman structures inform the proportions of the traditional architecture of the area, because of the reuse of this material. The stonework corresponds with Roman measurements and proportional systems. The reuse of this material is widespread in the region, finding its way into farm buildings and houses, determining much of their appearance. This illustrates that local crafts people will reuse any material that is available to them (Dickinson 2000).

Although materiality is significant, it is form that has been at the centre of vernacular study. Brunskill (1971) identifies that the plan and section can generate the form, as opposed to the Gestalt notion that form is the primary consideration. Brunskill (1981) also notes that different households may ascribe different labels to domestic spaces. One person's living room may be another's work shop. People who built or commissioned, houses wished to fulfil certain criteria which met their



Figure 2.5 A 16<sup>th</sup> Century cottage from Essex, now preserved in the Weald and Downland Centre. This type of form, in particular the roof would, later influence Arts & Crafts and the suburban semi.

pattern of work and living. England is representative of Northern Europe, in its domestic architecture. Pre industrial timber buildings tend to be between one and three floors. In urban areas these houses appear in rows, with a mixture of rows and detached properties. The scale and size of the houses was initially defined by the material limitations of timber. The use of brick and stone allowed houses to be built in a number of storeys. Roofs have always been pitched with variable

degrees of pitch and the use of hips and gables (Figure 2.5). Gables have been advantageous as a means of coping with various spans (Dyer 2006).

## 2.5 Craft and Tradition

It is the extent to which a house is built in non-industrialised elements that influences the perception of vernacular architecture. From an archaeological and historical perspective, it is important to understand





Figure 2.6 The interior of The Merchant Adventurers Hall in York. This example demonstrates the imperfections of working by hand and a knowledge of material. It also demonstrates the amendment of buildings and the continuation of craft, the 18<sup>th</sup> Century panelling and fire surround being an example of this.

and record differences in construction, charting evolution as a response to place, (Johnson 2010). With regard to what makes traditional architecture engaging in a more experiential sense is the human interaction in its production and the legibility of that interaction. This ultimately separates traditional forms of production from the construction industry, in terms of material and production. The crafting of a material by hand offers part of the narrative of a building's life.

When a material is worked in this way it avoids uniformity. The behaviour of different materials and their inherent uniqueness offers different outcomes. The input of the craftsperson is a personal and tactile knowledge of the material being worked, where errors and chance are left visible (Rasmussen 1962). This forms a connection between the craftsperson and material, still evident in existing buildings (Figure 2.6). Through trial and error, a process of learning is passed on between

generations in terms building trades and techniques (Lucie – Smith 1981). The increase in the standardisation of materials has contributed to a loss of narrative within the building process. Contemporary materials reveal little information about their age and origin. It could be argued that contemporary houses aim at ageless perfection without notion of the dimension of time (Pallasmaa 2005).

Nevertheless, natural materials are noted as contributing to the character of buildings. Whilst natural materials express weathering and decay, there is an implication of permanency in materials such as stone. There is a knowledge of where natural materials come from - the stone from the ground and wood from trees - yet the origin of plastics and other manufactured materials do not have specific origins (Rasmussen 1962). Arguably, the craftsperson in England has moved from the production of houses to conservation, with traditional skills being retained by a few professionals and specialists. The timescales and labour involved in many traditional processes make it financially prohibitive to employ these methods on a commercial level. According to Sennet (2009), the majority of these skills survive to maintain historic



buildings. The reduction in the role of craft in the building process adds to the value of vernacular buildings, providing a physical link to a pre-industrialised way of life and in turn a collective history.

## **2.6 Vernacular in the Present**

In the present the study of vernacular in Britain, has prompted increasing calls for greater collaboration between the different subject areas engaged with the discipline. The delineation of approaches can be seen within the Vernacular Architecture Journal, with clearly segregated categories of scientific and archaeological enquiry and cultural and historical examinations of the subject. With vernacular being placed in a wider context, as opposed to it being simply an artefact. The exploration of the wider context of its placement and its relationship to a given place and its existent surrounding environment. Along with how to engage with amendment and changes of function over time, (Mercer 1997). There has also been a questioning of the use of the term vernacular to identify particular architectural forms has become debatable. Even Brunskill (1981), opted to name his book 'Traditional Buildings of Britain'. It contains no mention of the term vernacular, as it is difficult to

find clear evidence in the current built environment (Green 2010). Differentiating clearly between types of dwelling over a long period of time in Britain has to take into account a myriad of variables, from status to fashion, material availability and function. Changes to houses in Britain prior to industrialisation may have been slow, but particularly in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, more rapid changes have undermined the notion of regional identity (Johnson 1993). When examined in this manner, minor differences in ornament and material are used to distinguish regional variation, with similar forms being found throughout the country.

The difficulties in locating architecture culturally and physically in England that have led to the term traditional being adopted instead of vernacular. Examining historic towns and villages with high degrees of preservation from a specific period will greatly enhance the knowledge of the architecture of a specific location, for that period. The study of areas with a greater representation of building from different periods might enable a more coherent picture of architectural evolution (Mercer 1997). Whilst typological classification can be recorded and documented, it fails to engage fully with

the cultural, social and political factors which have shaped these environments. The work of Dyer (2011) and Johnson (2010), seek to address some of these issues. However, for an architecture to be considered unique to a place, there needs to be clear evidence of the place rather than just isolated buildings.

Recent publications such as Learning from Vernacular (Frey 2013), highlight the need to create a new architectural language, based upon tradition. It showcases schemes where there are suggestions of vernacular qualities. Interest in the vernacular is still evident as a means of adding authenticity to new works of architecture. This has been influenced greatly by the work of Oliver (1997) and his publication Encyclopaedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World, drawing on contributions from many practitioners and academics to not only document vernacular architecture globally, but examine localised responses to dwelling; and how the vernacular elements can be adopted into contemporary design.

Nevertheless, contemporary building construction, which also needs to respond to developments in building regulations, has created a situation in which replication



Figure 2.7 The 'Whistling Witch' as it has been dubbed, Poundbury is representative of an imagined past in the present. Its aesthetic is more German or Middle European, with many features and forms which are unfamiliar in Dorchester (pounbury.org 2016).

of vernacular methods are not feasible. Even extensive use of traditional forms and materials do not generate houses that could be termed local vernacular. The shape and proportions of building elements needed to meet current conditions, means that local building details are no longer recognisable. In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, there was a neo-vernacular

revival. The aim was to return house design into localities, following the modern movement and its international style. This responded to concerns that places were no longer recognisable. Yet, the designers found it difficult to identify specific regional features that could not be found elsewhere. Of arguably greater concern was the criticism that these

developments received for being backward looking and not evolving a contemporary language of domestic architecture. All these criticisms were encapsulated in the word – pastiche (Figure 2.7).

## 2.7 Conclusion

Although there has been significant research into variation of architectural response and material use, there is no overall picture of the significance of vernacular architecture. The assessment of forms, aesthetics and construction, provide a means of comparison and differentiation, but can rarely be justified as being a localised cultural phenomenon. Instead, it is the broader picture of the environment in which they emerged that has become evident. Locating vernacular study in a particular region, and examining the buildings of different periods collectively may be a means of establishing the principles of a regional domestic architecture. However, as these buildings are generally historic, questions emerge about their relevance and whether they are replicable. This is exacerbated by criticisms of pastiche. To identify buildings which are considered to have unique properties in association with a given geographic or cultural location, is

possibly too complex as an undertaking. The connection which is felt with historic buildings is partly due to local identity, but could also be interpreted as a nostalgic reaction to an increasingly impersonal and global society. The conclusion is that despite the neo-vernacular revival, traditional building does not really provide guidance for a contemporary domestic regional architecture. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the vast majority of houses have been constructed by speculative housebuilders. They claim to be responding to demands of the purchasers. If this is true, then buyers' interests in place and identity should be reflected in the houses being produced. These houses are part of popular culture and therefore it would be interesting to discover who determines the shape of popular culture, and whether it can be perceived at the regional level.

### *3.0 Speculative Housing*



### 3.0 Speculative Housing

#### 3.1 Introduction

Much of the new housing development in England is produced within the private sector, by a small number of large speculative housebuilders who dominate the market (Ball 1996). The appearance of new residential developments is often limited, to what are deemed tried and tested design strategies (Hooper and Nichol 2010). A contributing factor to this approach is the length of the production process and the risks associated with speculative production. When analysed in comparison to other industries; housing development cannot respond to shifts in market conditions with the immediacy of other sectors. This has contributed to the generation of house types which minimise the risks associated with speculative development (Leopold and Bishop 1983). The houses produced could be sub-divided into three groups. Starter homes based upon affordability and value, middle sector homes aimed at those in regular employment and finally executive homes targeting the high income sector (Figure 3.1) (Goodchild 1997). Rationalisation of the process to reduce costs, has been an ongoing aspiration for speculative



Figure: 3.1 Three major housing types produced, *Starter*, *Middle Sector* and *Executive* (Barratt Homes 2014).

housebuilders. Since the 1990s, some companies have reduced their house types to less than 20, creating variations through ornament, landscaping and orientation (Hooper and Nichol 2010).

The speculative housing industry has tended to replicate the same language throughout the country, irrespective of location. It has also managed to develop an approach that borrows from different post 17<sup>th</sup> Century styles, often merging one style with another. This is often only a surface treatment, giving little substance to the form or aesthetic (Gray 1996). The procurement of materials through bulk purchasing which is referred to in the industry as *partnering agreements* contributes further to the replication of form and aesthetic (Barlow 1997). This also contributes to the approximations of past styles, with standardised components rarely replicating the originals which they emulate. Issues of changes in materiality and a move from Imperial measurement to Metric also contribute to a lack of authenticity in the specification of historic elements and details (Rasmussen 1962).

This country is unique within Europe and its attitudes to housing tenure, which have contributed to the dominance of

private house ownership. Looking back to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, growth in speculative building was stimulated by expanding urban areas and their associated wealth (Figure 3.2). This was brought about by rapid industrialisation and an increase in national wealth through international trade and expansion of the Empire. Speculative builders have always been particularly conscious of the profits that could be made in the development of new housing and are acutely aware of the influence of fashion and taste upon the saleability of their developments (Cruikshank & Burton 1990). It is the influence of Palladianism its interpretation in English Pattern Books,



Figure: 3.2 Image of mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century development, Swenborg Sq, Spitalfields, London. Originally, these properties would have been highly desirable to the growing middle classes, note the Palladian influenced door-cases. Picture taken prior to demolition c1966 (Spitalfields Life 2015).

that played a significant role in shaping aesthetics in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, with developers being aware of the taste of their target markets (Stevens-Curl 1993).

It is possible to conclude that present speculative housebuilding has become a cautious and uninventive industry, providing housing that is essentially functional. There is little desire for experimentation and improvement, as maintaining similar designs also enables material and component choice to remain unchanged. Whilst many have sighted the instability of the market as a key factor in the replication of building types and slow change in design approaches, Ball (1999) highlights the more general benefits to profit and the simplicity of approaches taken by house builders, as a key factor in a lack of innovation. The placelessness often associated with contemporary residential developments, could be derived from speculative building (Hooper and Nichol 2010). Historically, developments tended to be integrated more directly into existing street patterns and in turn had a more direct relationship to existing fabric of a place (Morris Smith 1997). The urban design strategies used by speculative housing developers often seek to segregate new developments with security and

exclusivity (Moran 2006).

### 3.2 The Emergence of Speculative Housing

One of the first speculative builders in Britain was Nicholas Barbon. Following the Great Fire of London in 1666, he realised the profit that could be made through the production of houses in inner London. His main areas of development were The Strand and Bloomsbury (Figure 3.3). His approach to building was highlighted by the collapse of his development on Mincing Lane, due to inadequate foundations. This did not stop him making large amounts of money through speculative building (Ellis 2001).

Ironically, Barbon (1685) illustrates the unease surrounding speculative building, highlighting the concern that country gentlemen had for new urban development; contributing to their perception that developments were enticing tenants from rural areas into the city. In turn, its impact on land value. Arguably more significant was that fashion in house design could create significant profits.

New Acts of Parliament were passed in 1707 and 1709, to prevent the spread of



fire. They stipulated that wooden eaves and cornices were to be outlawed and box-sashes were to be set back from the facade in 4 inch reveals. It was not until it became unfashionable to have doors and windows flush with the facade, that speculative builders followed the legislation. The three main cities to be developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century were Bath, London and Edinburgh (Figure 3.3). The significance is that they were revered at the time as exuding taste and quality (Cruikshank 1986). At the time, speculative building was primarily focussed upon housing the middle classes. By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the efficiency with which terraces could be constructed and the resulting profits for developers, meant that it became the preferred form for new houses across the classes (Roger 1995).

### 3.3 The Evolution of Speculative Housing

Advances in technology have been greatly beneficial to speculative houses. The industrialisation of brick production meant that it became a very cost effective material. Through industrial advancements more control over the firing of bricks enabled a greater palette of colours for ornamental use. This provided a choice

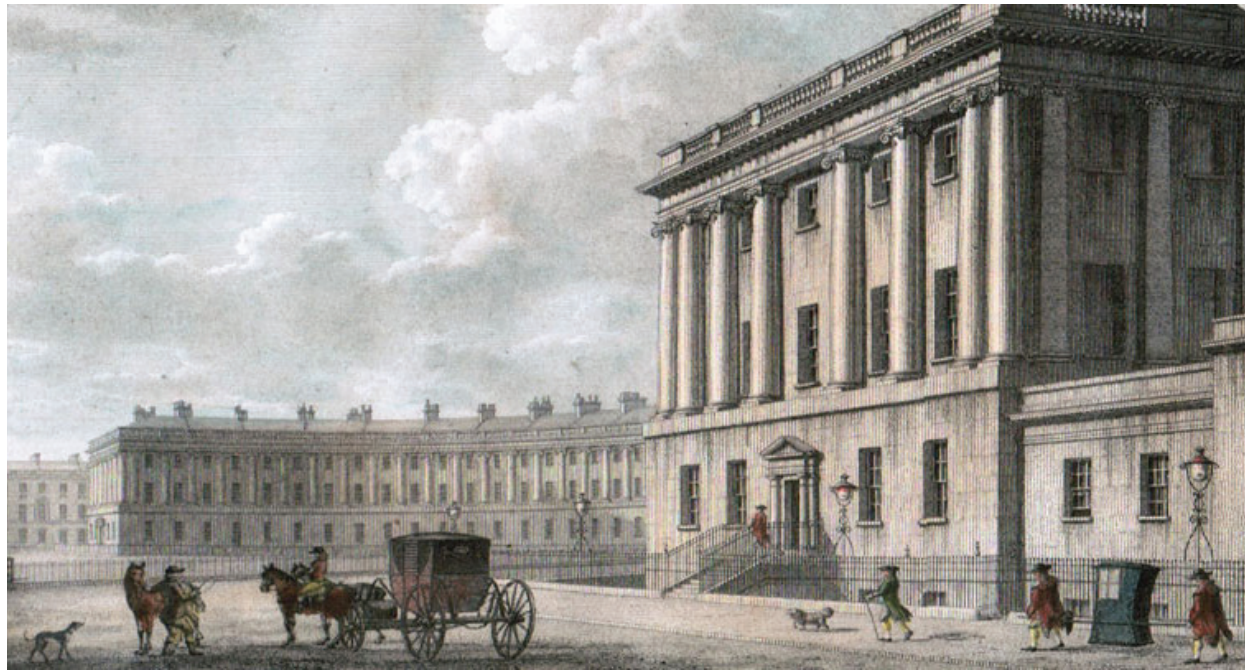


Figure: 3.3 Watts (1794) illustration of the Royal Crescent in Bath, provides a glimpse of development shortly after completion. It is the repetition of elements which appealed to the fashion conscious, but also provided large profits for developers (www.no1royalcrescent.org.uk 2015).

for speculative builders, which married well with the expectations of people's new found wealth. They wished to appear of the moment, with regards to fashion and taste (Parissien 1997).

Alongside the industrialisation of brick production, advancements in glass technology meant greater affordability. It also enabled larger panes of glass to be produced. This advancement created larger windows, allowing them to occupy a greater amount of wall space in new

developments, in turn reducing material and labour costs in wall construction (Chaulkin 1974). The introduction of stucco from Italy, which started in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century also provided a means of profit, as it could be used to cover areas of poor quality brickwork (Figure 3.4), (Cruikshank, Burton 1990).

Ornament became an increasingly important aspect of speculative houses; inspired by the aesthetics of the Classical world and interpreted to suit English taste.



Figure: 3.4 Marble Hill (1729) London, designed by Roger Morris in the Palladian style. It is significant for its white stucco render and pared down aesthetic; which influenced many other 18<sup>th</sup> Century developments (morethanarchitects 2015).

It was not only décor and aesthetic but the use of Classical proportion, which aided the standardisation of many elements. Much of the information used in this new style of development stemmed from 17<sup>th</sup> Century Italian pattern books, advising on the layout, proportion and aesthetic (Chaulkin 1974). One of the key architects to influence English Classicism was Andre Palladio, who produced numerous pattern books of Neo-Classical design and theory. It was a shared belief that nature held the key to good design, and proportion was a

vital aspect of this belief (Parissien 2008). The early pattern books of Robert Morris (1750) were particularly referenced by developers, as they placed great emphasis on the correct use of proportion as the key to providing perfection within architecture. Although not all developers could afford or wished to employ architects in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the pattern books which emerged in this period provided a form of manual for the design and ornamentation of buildings. Fashionable motifs and designs were widely copied and trends followed

closely to ensure a good sale (Cruikshank & Burton 1990). It can therefore be seen that there were a number of influences on speculative housebuilders. However, responding to the region and locality were not amongst them, as the architectural language of the time was based upon domestic and European interpretations of Classicism. Nevertheless, location became of increasing importance, with developers wanting to associate new schemes with desirable locations in cities and towns. Land values had steadily risen in urban areas to an extent that profit margins were being squeezed. The most attractive land for purchase had connections to centres of employment or lines of communication (Ellis 2001). The primary concern for those involved with the development process was profit. Although it was acknowledged that appearance could be a key to the success of a development, even the architects viewed this objective in financial terms (Gray 1996).

### 3.4 Speculative Housing in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, terraced houses were the most common form of domestic speculative development. However, with greater affluence and aspiration, people



began to view them as 19<sup>th</sup> Century manual workers' accommodation. Terraced housing still had associations with inner city squalor and factory towns. The publication of the Tudor Walters report (1919), further reinforced public opinion in relation to the inadequacy of the terrace model. The report outlined a housing shortage of 600,000 properties, not all of which would be destined for social housing. There was a wider need for private housing in this period, which provided speculative housebuilders with opportunities for development and profit. Whilst the report sought to address the design and specification of new housing in the public sector, its publication greatly influenced design approaches in the private sector. This combination of factors was key in the expansion of house building in this period (Carr & Whitehead 2001).

The largest area of growth in the private provision of housing, was in suburban development. A majority of housing in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century sought to attract custom from the growing middle classes, who were starting to re-locate in the expanding suburbs (Oliver, Davis, Bentley, 1981). This correlated not only with the increased availability of mortgages, but also a rise in consumerism by the late 1920s. The Tudor

Walters report also generated demand for greater external space and lower densities, which contributed to the popularity of semi-detached houses (Smith-Morris 1997).

Development during the Inter-war period can be seen as the most influential upon speculative residential development and aesthetics in 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It was in this period that both aesthetic and planning approaches were implemented which mirror most closely, current practice. The style of properties drew upon the form of English cottages. This was reflective of a further desire to be disassociated with urban housing forms. Homeliness is often related to the architectural language which emerged and the application and use of elements that developers felt would appeal to prospective buyers (Chapman 1999). The inclusion of faux timber elements and Tudouresque details which alluded to past vernacular imagery drew criticism from critiques. For instance, John Gloag (1934) questioned the aesthetics of new development as follows;

*Why are you, or perhaps your neighbours, living in an imitation Tudor house with stained wooden slats shoved onto the front of it to make it look like a half-timbered*

*house? Those slats having nothing to do with the construction of the house. They are just applied ornaments. The house does not look like a real half-timbered house and it never can. It has been built quite different to a Tudor house. Why do we live in this sort of half-baked pageant, always hiding our ideas in the clothes of another age?*

This view was echoed by other commentators and practitioners, in relation to the dominant aesthetic of houses (Jeremiah 2000). Developers had in essence, produced a kind of re-imagining of the English building tradition, which had preoccupied many designers in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries (Figure 3.5). Simplified and making use of the technology of the time in an unobtrusive way, an approach to residential design developed, which was palatable to English taste (Lewis 2014). The re-imaginings of a traditional English way of life were also aroused by the developers. New schemes spoke of national feeling in the wake of the First World War and was marketed in such a way as to evoke homeliness and tradition; conjuring up notions of security and belonging, stability and permanence (Oliver, Davis and Bentley 1981). The planning of new suburban development

made use of crescents and cul-de-sacs, which provided more containment to the houses than the terrace form. With the accommodation of the car into the suburban environment, these planning approaches resulted in less passing traffic than streets of terraced houses. Pedestrian and vehicular access was now purposeful as opposed to ad-hock, in turn breaking away from historic development patterns. Smaller neighbourhoods were developed, with a more introspective communication with their surroundings, (Lewis 2014).

Greater emphasis was also placed on grandeur, as semi-detached houses alluded to being larger unified properties, the accommodation of garages further increased their apparent size. This further reinforced associations with status. What was being sold was exclusivity; the planning of new developments as well as the terminology used alluded to hereditary wealth and landownership, reaffirming notions of country life (Wellings 2006). The term estate was employed, whilst today it may have acquired negative connotations of social housing. During the interwar period its use was to reinforce these notions of status and standing. Names given to streets within developments echoed this notion, referring to trees



Figure: 3.5 An example of a 1930s semi-detached property in a market town, its cottage aesthetic further enhanced by the garden space provided in many houses of the period.

or local rural areas, towns and villages. Whilst this had occurred to some extent in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, this was a practice used in a majority of developments in this period (Whitehead & Carr 2001).

A notion began to gain traction, of moving up the housing chain. The housebuilders fully understood this aspiration and tailored development accordingly. Since the interwar period, newness alongside tradition have been apparently

contradictory, but important factors in the design of new housing. Housing in the 1920s and 30s reflected this juxtaposition, providing modern utility with aesthetics that alluded to the past and more rural housing forms. This has continued into the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and into the 21<sup>st</sup>, with certain demographics seeking the advantages of modern technology alongside the re-assurance of traditional appearance (Lewis 2014).

The inter-war era was a key period for housing developers as it shaped many of the practices seen in the present. The financial crash of 1932 is significant, as many companies had grown from other branches of the building sector to establish housebuilding companies. The result of the periods of depression in the market, left many incomplete developments and the liquidation of many of these companies. Features such as changes in the status and style of buildings within developments can still be observed and signify the re-prioritisation of prospective customer base. Residential building output peaked in 1920/1 and 1938/9, with an aggregate peak in 1937. Development in this period has never been matched in terms of volume, and the impact of development in this period and is still visible throughout England. Many of the business practices developed in the interwar period are also evident. Whilst construction has never reached the same levels of output, private housing development has enjoyed sporadic highs, with the 1960s and 1990s subsequently experiencing the highest levels of development since the interwar years (Barras 2007).

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the emphasis in terms of design in the private housing

market has focussed upon interpretations of traditional houses and latterly it has also emulated Georgian and Victorian architecture. Modernism has never really been reflected in speculative development in aesthetic terms, while other forms of development incorporated aspects of it in plan, form and manufactured elements. As with the terrace form at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, modernism too gained connotations of poverty and lower class (Lewis 2014). The re-engagement with Georgian and Victorian architecture ran concurrently with post-war modernist development, in part as a reaction to it. This gave rise to a greater level of middle class ownership of historic properties, which in turn led developers to emulate characteristics of Georgian and Victorian design in their schemes, often referring to them as ‘Town House’ properties (Blunt & Dowling 2006). This is particularly the case in areas associated with Georgian and Victorian architecture (Powers 2008).

The sensitivity of the market is something speculative developers still have to take into account, as the high levels of risk in comparison to other businesses, and comparatively low returns make housing development a difficult market to be in. Timing is a key part of speculative

development, as a much better price can be achieved in a period of stability, while in a downturn, there is the ability to take advantage of land acquisition. These factors contribute to the relatively small number of volume builders in Britain, as the requirement for substantial outlays prior to the completion of a development make the industry readily susceptible to market forces, requiring residual capital and assets to operate in economic downturns (Barras 2007).

### **3.5 Speculative Housing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Speculative building can be seen as Ball (1999) suggests, as being slow to evolve, many of the approaches to design and business have changed little from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. There are two aspects to the marketing of houses, which are shared by most housebuilding companies. The show-home has become the means by which the consumer can experience an idealised interpretation of how their products should be inhabited. Acting as a stage set, consumer items and high end décor are placed to sell the property as a lifestyle choice (Chapman 1999). The design of new housing primarily focusses on the façade and entrance, aiming at what has



colloquially become known as curb appeal. In essence, it relates to the notion that a house is sold on first impressions. The focus is upon the appearance of the façade, prior to the person entering the property. Façades often emulate and incorporate elements borrowed from high status houses. The form and aesthetic are designed to carry traditional associations with the upper classes. As with earlier speculative development, semi-detached properties are often paired to give the overall appearance of a larger property (Moran 2005).

Volume housebuilders employ mass produced elements that stylistically mimic earlier development, but often in imitation materials, which are suggestive of a myriad of historic styles (Figure 3.6). In adopting historic elements, the developer is also conveying and encoding a sense of timeless permanence, which reinforces attitudes of property as a secure investment. It offers the visual aesthetics associated historically with status, yet provides the technological and lifestyle requirements of the present (Maudlin 2009). It is in this practice that the speculative building industry attracts most criticism, by relying on the supply of pre-manufactured elements that assume



Figure: 3.6 A development from the late 1990s, by one of the large housebuilding companies in England. This demonstrates the myriad of styles, forms and aspects of materiality, introduced on one individual property.

some kind of tangential relationship with the past (Ball 1999). It is through this approach that developers are able to retain a limited portfolio of designs, altering the aesthetics with different manufactured elements (Hooper & Nicol 2000). Windows, doors, cladding, sills, lintels, tiles and slates are bought in bulk and offer the ability to mix, match and amend the appearance of each project. Many of these elements approximate to their historic counterparts. An important

aspect of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries has been increases in material cost and reduction in transport costs. It has enabled trussed rafters to be imported from Czechoslovakia, bricks from Belgium and Holland, and roof slates from Spain; all contributing to lower construction costs (Powers 2008).

One of the major aspects in buildings appearing to be of the place in which they are located, is that the materials were

taken from the ground or the trees nearby. In tone and colour, imported materials can never feel to be part of the place, and thereby cannot assist in a regional identity (Ward 2004). Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, development control authorities were having such battles with modernist design that they permitted almost any proposal for houses that alluded to traditional design (Maudlin 2009). In the event, virtually all the speculatively housing output did not relate to traditional design and a language that was neither contemporary nor historical seemed to pervade the whole country (Ball 1999). Thus, an ironic set of circumstances is produced in which people wish to purchase new houses, with modern construction, that appear to belong an unspecified historical period and are associated with a traditional town.

Continued suburban expansion into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has put pressure on the outskirts of traditional towns to permit the construction of larger houses in ever greater numbers, predominantly in semi-detached or detached forms. They appear to have no connection with the existing environment, and moved house design even further away from might be perceived as regional identity. Some local authorities began to become concerned

at the loss of identity. County Planning Officer Douglas Jennings-Smith was one of the first to become alarmed as he looked around his county (Smales 1991). He set up a small team which produced the Essex Design Guide for Residential and Mixed Areas, which aimed to re-assert regional characteristics (Goodey 1998). Other authorities followed and an evaluation of these design guides will be presented in Chapter 5.0. Attention to the quality of design received a considerable boost when the Government established the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) from 1999-2011. It aimed to motivate public demand for good design, part of which was achieved through design review panels (CABE, 2011). Some speculative housebuilders sought to distance themselves from the volume housebuilders, by seeking to promote their dwellings in the same sort of language as CABE and the design guides. Current responses to market demand have prompted differing approaches to development and design. What has emerged through the economic downturn in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is more specialist developers, catering for different target markets. This has also led larger house builders to acquire small scale developers. The take-over of Charles Church by

Persimmon, illustrates the reactions of the housebuilding industry to future development (BBC 2002). This action has enabled Persimmon to continue with volume production, whilst having a brand that can deliver what it termed premium homes. Describing the brand as follows;

*Charles Church is one of the country's foremost housebuilding brands with an unrivalled reputation for the design and quality of the homes it builds. We build premium homes under this brand tailored to local markets where our research and experience has identified a strong demand for a premium product.*

(Persimmon Annual Report 2014)

This statement illustrates a distinction between this type of developer and the mass production of private housing, that can be seen as a product of volume builders, with more bespoke projects being carried out by smaller developers. It also highlights a more tailored approach to design. Visually the distinction between the two brands is apparent in terms of design and detail. It also illustrates an awareness of market and an ability to target particular demographics and locations. This represents a nuanced



strategy; in which it is perceived that a proportion of the house buying population are willing to pay more for a product that appears to have more integrity. A typical promotion is as follows:

### ***New Homes with Character***

*Award-winning housebuilder... has an established reputation...for its masterful interpretation of local vernacular architecture...creating luxurious new homes that benefit from the ultimate in quality, style, comfort, practicality, innovation and beauty.... The company is renowned for...producing beautiful new homes that sit very comfortably in their surroundings, complimenting and enhancing the area.... It is like owning the most beautiful old home, though with all the latest innovations and none of the problems (Millwood Designer Homes nd).*

Companies like Charles Church and Millward appear offer a higher quality product, what is evident is the lack of change that has occurred in terms of design approach. In many respects both companies are not offering a new regional approach. There is a greater attention to detail than provided by the volume housebuilders, none the less it is



Figure: 3.7 A development by Millwood Designer Homes, which is clearly imitating a variety of historic architecture, it is the attention to detail and high specification which elevates these developments, however pastiche (Millwood Designer Homes 2016).

still a national architectural language, as opposed to localised or regional response.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

The investigation into speculative development housing has shown that in England, volume housebuilders dominate the market for new homes. It has also been

shown that they are risk averse, and will favour a limited number of house types that can be applied anywhere. This country is unique in Europe in its overwhelming desire for the ownership of houses. This can be traced back to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century when speculative building was stimulated by expansion of the Empire, rapid industrialisation, and international trade



that enabled ownership of new houses. Speculative builders have always been conscious of the need to make a profit, and how fashion and taste can have significant effects on the sale of houses. This led to them following pattern books as a means of establishing a design style. It has been shown that speculative building has a long history, going back to the Great Fire of London; and for a long time the builders only complied with regulations if they coincided with fashion and demand. Advances in technology have been greatly beneficial to speculative housebuilding. Initially, it was related to the production of materials and ornament derived from classical design.

From the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the advent of suburbia moved house form onto semi-detached and detached houses from the traditional terrace. The demand for these forms became focussed on the edge of traditional towns. The rise in car ownership and the layout of crescents and cul-de-sacs affected traditional patterns, leading to towns being classified as historical cores and the rest. The aesthetic demand for houses as brick or stone boxes, disguised all sorts of modifications that were occurring under the surface; while the façade and entrance have been

arguably receiving the most attention. Volume housebuilders started to produce the same houses all over the country, with little challenge from development control. This phenomenon has extended to the mimicry of earlier speculative styles, further compounding a sense of ubiquity in housing design and development. Some local authorities became concerned about loss of identity and began to produce design guides that will be evaluated in chapter 5.0. The change in mood invited some housebuilders to distance themselves from national ubiquity. They claim that they are interpreting the local vernacular, which in many cases is a response to later standardised approaches to design. This will be examined in chapter 11.0. Many of the historic elements that appear in new projects allude to attitudes which are more deeply rooted in the public psyche, thus an examination of what constitutes a home will be undertaken in the next chapter.

#### *4.0 Notions of House & Home in England*

## 4.0 Notions of House and Home in England

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on clarifying the concept of home and its relationship with culture in England. The term home can have different interpretations, and it is often confused with house. Home exceeds the physical form of a shelter that is a primary objective of house. Home also includes social relations between individuals and groups (Cieraad, 1999), and an emotional meaning, which is formed between residents and their places of residence (Dovey, 1985). The definition offered by Sudjic (2009) and Blunt and Dowling (2006) is that home is more than a building but is also a place that satisfies a range of human needs (Holloway and Hubbard, 2001). It can be a private environment in which symbols, dreams, ideas and aspirations might develop (Lantz, 1996; Becker, 2003; Twigg, 2006). It also has the potential to be a transactional location where residents interact with an environment, which changes over time and leads to behavioural, emotional and cognitive bonding with a meaningful physical setting (Altman and Rogoff, 1986; Werner et al.,



Figure: 4.1 Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs (Maslow 1954), demonstrating the key emotional and psychological human needs.

1988). The aim of home is to provide a positive interaction between people, place and a building that forms a set of socio-cultural benefits (Mallet, 2004).

### 4.2 Human Needs

The seminal works that focus on human needs are essentially those by Maslow (1954) and Max-Neef (1991, 1992); and their theories form the basis of this section of the study. Maslow (1954) proposes a

needs hierarchy (see Figure 4.1). At the base of the pyramid, are physiological aspects. These include shelter, comfort, safety and security. On moving up the pyramid, the picture becomes more complex, as psychological needs are added. These involve belongingness, status, privacy, and beauty at the apex. Maslow (1954) suggests that each lower need must be met before moving up to the next level. However, a criticism could be that the hierarchy appears in the abstract.

There is no reference to tangible objects, such as a house, that might engender a physicality through which these notions could be realised. Nevertheless, there is a clear notion that satisfaction increases with rising up the hierarchy.

Max-Neef (1991, 1992) responds to this intangibility by introducing satisfiers, and categorising them into a matrix (Figure 4.2). He proposes that human needs should be understood as a system, in which they are interrelated and interactive. The rows identify nine aspects of the human experience, and the four columns suggest how these notions might be enacted. It is clear that although differently expressed, Max-Neef (1992) concurs with the essence of Maslow's (1954) main themes.

After considering both the theories by Maslow (1954) and Max-Neef (1991, 1992), a simplified representation of the main issues common to both pioneers is shown in (Figure 4.2). This diagram provides a structure for some important issues that might be addressed in the concept of home, and are related to an increasing quality of life. According to Maslow's (1954) human development theory, quality of life is identified as a hierarchy of need satisfaction for the

Needs according to: axiological categories	Being	Having	Doing	Interacting
<b>Subsistence</b>	Physical health, mental health, equilibrium, sense of humour, adaptability	Food, shelter, work	Feed, procreate, rest, work	Living environment, social setting
<b>Protection</b>	Care, adaptability, autonomy, equilibrium, solidarity	Insurance systems, savings, social security, health systems, rights, family, work	Co-operate, prevent, plan, take care of, cure, help	Living space, social environment, dwelling
<b>Affection</b>	Self-esteem, solidarity, respect, tolerance, generosity, passion, sense of humour...	Friendship, family, partnership, relationships with nature	Make love, caress, express emotions, share, take care of, cultivate, appreciate	Privacy, intimacy, home, spaces of togetherness
<b>Understanding</b>	Critical conscience, receptiveness, curiosity, astonishment, rationality...	Literature, teachers, method, educational policies, communication policies	Investigate, study, experiment, educate, analyse, meditate	Settings of formative interaction, schools, academies, communities, family...
<b>Participation</b>	Adaptability, receptiveness, willingness, determination, dedication, respect...	Rights, responsibilities, duties, privileges, work	Become affiliated, co-operate, propose, share, interact, express opinions...	Settings of participative interaction, parties, associations, communities...
<b>Leisure</b>	Curiosity, receptiveness, imagination, recklessness, sense of humour, sensuality...	Games, spectacles, clubs, parties, peace of mind	Day-dream, brood, dream, remember, give way to fantasies, have fun, play...	Privacy, intimacy, spaces of closeness, free time, surroundings, landscapes
<b>Creation</b>	Passion, determination, intuition, imagination, boldness, rationality, curiosity...	Abilities, skills, method, work	Work, invent, build, design, compose, interpret	Productive settings, workshops, cultural groups, spaces for expression...
<b>Identity</b>	Sense of belonging, consistency, self-esteem, differentiation...	Symbols, language, religions, habits, values, norms, memory, work...	Commit oneself, integrate oneself, confront, decide on, recognize oneself...	Social rhythms, everyday settings, maturation stages...
<b>Freedom</b>	Autonomy, self-esteem, determination, passion, boldness, tolerance...	Equal rights	Dissent, choose, be different from, run risks, disobey...	Temporal/spatial plasticity

Figure: 4.2 Matrix of needs and satisfiers (Max-Neef 1992)



members of a community. The greater the satisfaction of needs extends up the hierarchy, the greater will be the quality of life in that community. In terms of the provision of places to live, a developed society should be seeking to satisfy belongingness, status, self-esteem, privacy and beauty (Figure 4.3).

Moreover, all these facets should not be considered as isolated events. For example, Altman (1975) discusses the interrelationship between privacy and belongingness. These qualities may be perceived as mutually exclusive. However, human beings are complex creatures and crave one or the other at different times. The point is that both options should be available. Nezlek (1994, 2002) observes that the apparent contradiction of this polarised situation seems to increase as people become older. Altman (1975, 1976) introduces an interesting concept of individuals using privacy as a means of maintaining a control over being overwhelmed by numbers of people. In this proposition, he points out that crowding, rather than intensifying social interaction actually creates social isolation and privacy is used as an escape mechanism. So essentially, it is vital to understand the difference between

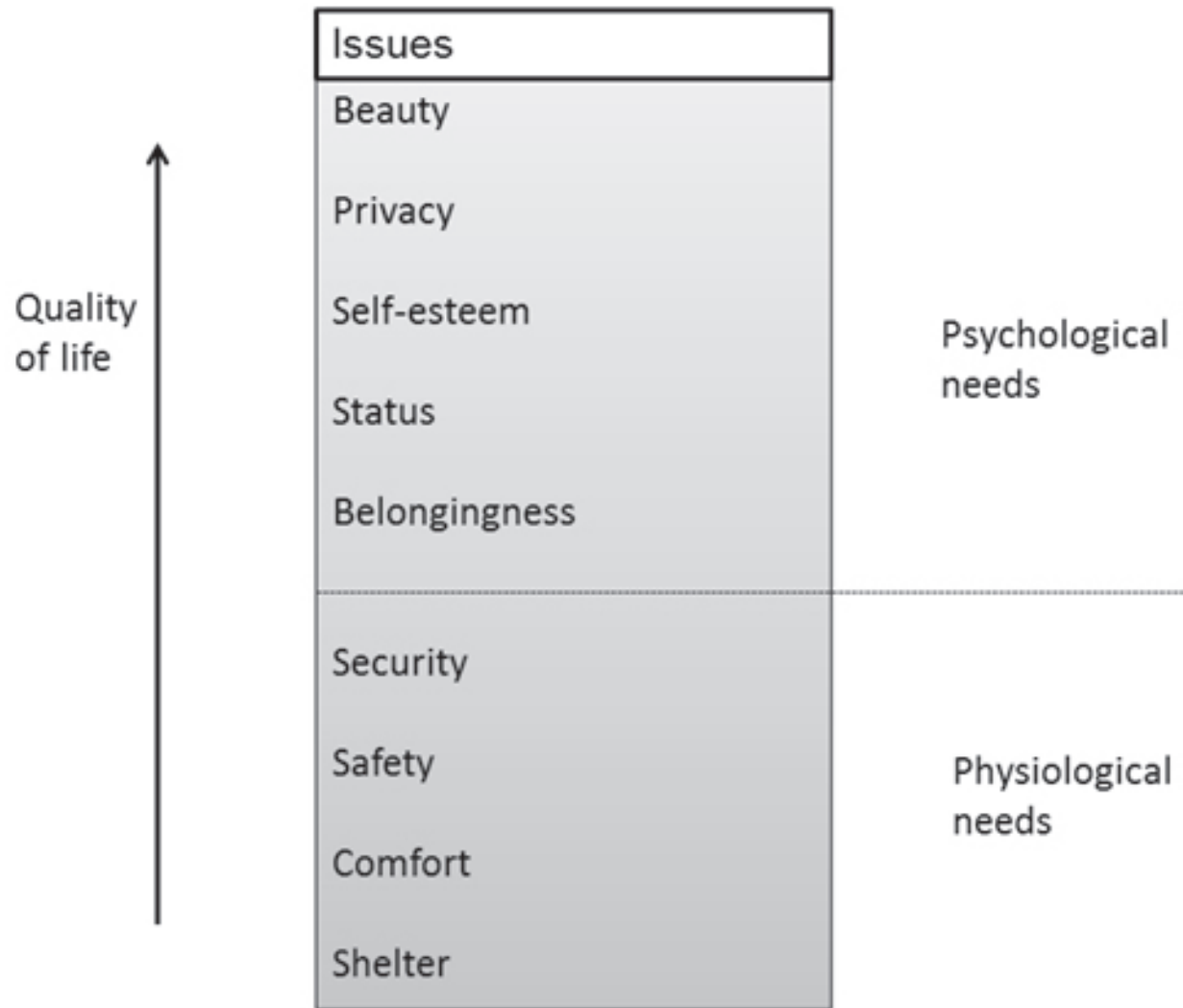


Figure: 4.3 Simplified diagram for hierarchy of human needs.

privacy and isolation, interaction and crowding. Dupuis and Thorns (1998) and Phillips (1992) recognise the relationship between interaction and security. The desire for continued independence is a strong stimulus as people become older. However, there are associated risks and the provision of security devices and procedures is viewed as both a safeguard and a threat. This highlights the need to achieve full consideration of security and surveillance versus freedom and openness; as well as privacy and refuge versus social interaction.

It is clear that the concept of satisfaction of human needs is fundamental for attaining quality of life. This is expressed in the hierarchical structure, i.e. from basic biological maintenance up to self-fulfilment and psychological enhancement. It is evident that individuals seek to satisfy needs for two main reasons: to accomplish higher levels of personal contentment and to achieve social recognition, in order to achieve their full potential (Maslow 1954). This section of the study has identified a simplified hierarchy of human needs that could be related to the concept of home and to quality of life. It shows that while physical needs must be met, the real challenge is in satisfying the higher order attributes. In addition, these aspects are

not experienced in isolation, and their interaction is apparent. As belongingness, status, self-esteem, privacy and beauty are high level objectives, it is important to understand how these concepts are related to the place where people live.

### 4.3 Place

Place is an identified topic within several different disciplines such as **Philosophy, Geography, Sociology, Psychology, Architecture, and Environmental Science**. Each discipline has its own perspective on place. From a philosophical perspective, Casey (1997) discusses the notion and states that people are immersed in a place, and cannot act without it. People live in places and communicate with others in them. Human place is part of the **natural order**; humans live as part of the natural and biological world, respecting all the rules of nature (Preston, 2003). For Malpas (1999), place constitutes the experiential fact of our existence, people cannot produce anything unless they are in a place.

In the geographical approach, place as a term is used mainly in studies related to **spatial concepts**, which are often associated with region (Cresswell, 2004),

settlement, location or position on the surface of the earth (Foote & Azoryaha, 2009). In the early 1970s, this spatial interpretation had a new notion driven by human geographers, such as Tuan (1974) who coined the term “topophilia” – the love of place; and Relph (1976) who coined the terms “place and placelessness”. Their approach to place is drawn from phenomenology, the interpretive study of human experience that is concerned with the person’s association with specific places (Tuan, 1974). It is a broader concept than just a location as it includes a sense of place by which it becomes a meaningful location (Agnew 1987).

Sociologists also address the term place as more than just geographical location. Cresswell (2004) points out that everything “has a socio-geographical basis”, and he analyses it as a sort of relationship between a person and a certain location or building, which has become known as **place attachment**. Gieryn (2000) outlines place as having three essential and associated features – the first is geographical location. Second, the physical, in which place is a substance, a set of elements or objects at a specific spot in the universe, formed by people who interact with it (Habraken, 1998). Third,

place has to do with investment in meaning and values. In this context, Cristoforetti et al. (2011) demonstrate the relationship between people and a place as a set of feelings affected by the setting of that place, which in turn enhances a sense of belonging. People's attachment to a place can be influenced by the design of the town, neighbourhood and home. A sense of place, from the sociological point of view, is how to attribute a meaning to a built form (Rotenberg and McDonogh, 1993). Place has an influence on the ranking of neighbourhoods in terms of quality of life. A study by Larson et al. (2013, p.231) about people's attitudes towards an environment defined seven variables that affect the relationship between people and a place, namely: length of time a person stays in a place; location of residence; where they were born; community involvement; membership of associations; whether they feel respected; and whether they are considered a local. Giuliani (2003) defines "attachment" as the feeling people experience towards certain places and to the communities that the places help to define and that are themselves defined by the places – home (family, relations, friends), workplace (colleagues), church (fellow worshippers), neighbourhood (neighbours), town,

country. Place attachment can be defined in terms of an individual's effective or emotional connection to a spatial setting. Attachment to a place is a set of sensations about a geographical location that emotionally connect an individual to that place (Cristoforetti et al 2011). For Norberg-Schulz (1980), dwelling means belonging to a place. He predicates that people's daily actions have a connection with specific places, which in turn create feelings for those places. In this sense, he indicates that individual's identification depends on his belonging to a place.

Altman and Low (1992) point out that house attachment can be shaped through three elements: physical setting, geographical location and the meanings people invest in; a neighbourhood with better quality housing stock is more likely to have strong emotional bonds with its residents. In Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001), the results illustrate that place attachment develops to different degrees towards places with different spatial ranges: house, neighbourhood and town. Attachment to place is considered a fundamental human need (Relph, 1976), a need that contemporary society is increasingly unable to satisfy owing to its tendency towards gradual spatial

uniformity, increased mobility and hence a purely functionalistic relationship with places (Giuliani, 2003). From a psychological perspective, Altman and Law (1992) note that people develop bonds with places that can satisfy their needs such as privacy, security and serenity. The relationship between individuals and place has two dimensions: an emotional dimension, which is the bond with a place, and a cognitive dimension, which refers to self-awareness as part of a physical place. Neighbourhood attachment is formed by features of the built environment and perceptions of that environment (Hummon, 1992). For other psychologists, the relationship between people and place – individuals and groups – and how it influences identities is the central focus of their studies. Place identity is defined according to the degree of involvement between a person or group and a particular place (Relph, 1979). For Relph (1976), three interrelated elements shape the identity of a place; physical features or appearance, observable activities or functions, and meanings or symbols. Place identity is a substructure of **self-identity**, much like gender and social class, and is comprised of perceptions and conceptions regarding the environment. Zumthor (1998, p.7)

points out that thoughts need to be able to express themselves: “thought travels through a specific space which contains traces of place and architecture”. Zumthor gives a lot of attention to the embedding of buildings in the landscape; he connects the object to its place. Norberg-Schulz conceives of people’s life world as a basis for orientation and identity; he seeks meaning and symbolic function through understanding the systematic pattern of the settlement (Norberg-Schulz, 1980, 1985).

People personalise their homes with decorations, so that their houses and gardens reflect and communicate who they are (Despres, 1991; Rapoport, 1982). When attachment to place grows, an individual starts to identify himself with this place, both at a larger scale (nation, town, etc.) and at a smaller scale (workplace, neighbourhood, home, rooms) (Giuliani, 2003). Place is very important in most people’s lives, and consequently, it is significant in influencing identity (Relph, 1976). In this context, Norberg-Schulz (1980) adds that the environment has a spatial structure that facilitates orientation and consists of elements that determine its character. He points out that human identity can be a function of the character of places and may depend on one’s

belonging to a specific place. In addition, place symbolises the life experiences of its users. Past, present and future offer different dynamisms, which can stimulate one another (Bachelard, 1994).

The **spirit of place** or *genius loci* is a Roman concept, which indicates that every independent being has its *genius*, its guardian spirit. This spirit gives life to people and places and determines their character. In this sense, the spirit refers to what a place is or what it may become (Norberg-Schulz, 1980). *Genius loci* is described as representing the sense people have of a place, understood as the sum of all physical as well as symbolic values in nature and the human environment. He emphasises that place means more than merely a location, as there exists a spirit which cannot be analysed by scientific methods. He proposes a phenomenological method in order to understand the spirit of a place through a depiction of its physical features and an interpretation of the human experiences within that place. According to the principles of phenomenological methods used to investigate the substance of existence, Rifaioglu and Guchan (2008) define the spirit of place as the formation of genetic order and its interrelations; which form the urban or rural context

from the origin of the place’s existence, to a dialectic link between the place and its inhabitants. Consequently, place is formed through time by its unique and distinctive character. For Cullen (1961), the spirit of place is an elusive phenomenological concept. The conceptual approach to its meaning emphasises that it is created through history in a particular place in a town, and requires an individual approach to conservation activities. Places have a coherent narrative that connects their past to their present and could guide their future (Brook 2000).

Rapoport (1969, pp.29–30) argues that the influence of a site is “cultural rather than physical”, as it depends on the goals, ideals and values of people or period, and the choice of a good site “whether lake, river, mountain or coast depends on this cultural definition”. He adds that site selection may depend, at least partially, on political and social viewpoints. Four main aspects of place can be identified in this study – natural order, spatial concepts, self-identity, spirit of place.



#### 4.4 House

Researchers have identified the non-emotionally based aspect of house (Relph 1976; Tuan 1980; Horwitz & Tognoli 1982; Dovey 1985; Casey 1993; Moore 2000). This includes the way that the house is **arranged on the site** for spatial comfort and convenience; and the nature of its **external spaces**. These are normally associated with the concept of front and back. In a traditional arrangement, the front is approached from the street, in a formal manner, and expresses to the public how the residents feel about their house. The back is generally private and secluded. It is a safe environment for children, and activities take place there, that the residents would not wish to display to the public.

There have been alternatives, such as Radburn New Jersey, where in 1929 Stein and Wright carried forward the now famous arrangement of providing access for pedestrians only, at the front of the houses. Vehicles were restricted to back courts, with garages for residents and pathways to back doors. This was the iconic reversal of the conventional distinction between front and back. The separation was based on child safety at a time of growing car ownership.

The Radburn layout has interpreted by numbers of architects, often as a cul-de-sac network of streets accessible by car. These are distributed by a perimeter road that encircles the site. Pedestrians follow pathways on the inside of the schemes. In this way, pedestrians never have to cross routes used by vehicles (Woudstra, 2006). The house can usually be characterised as a physical unit, with distinct **internal spaces** for its residents providing shelter and protection; and a structure separating private from public domains (Lawrence 1987).

It is an artefact (Rapoport, 1985) that may also provide investment returns and other financial benefits through ownership. Therefore, as Le Corbusier (1946) points out, a house can be interpreted as merely a machine for living in, as it lacks psychological significance for individuals (Dovey 1985). It is essentially provision for activities, where each space may have a specific function i.e. living, sleeping, cooking, bathing, storing and entertaining (Rapoport 1998). The spaces can be cellular, where each activity is allocated a separate space, or open plan, where a number of different activities occur in a single space (Hanson 1998). This organisation of spaces is fundamentally

about responding to relationships between users, in which their interactions may be formal or informal, intimate or distant, private or public in nature. Moreover, the permeability or accessibility of spaces is a variable that has been investigated to consider the public versus private character of these spaces. The arrangement of spaces determines the formal compositions of the building. However, a house is more than simply space. It has a physical form that can be characterised by features such as length, width, scale, geometry, texture, colour and light. It is constructed from building **materials**, which might be described as warm, cold, creative or bland (Rapoport 1969).

A building constructed of natural materials e.g. brick, wood and stone evokes completely different feelings to man-made materials e.g. concrete, steel, glass and metals. It is also recognised that different **architectural types** e.g. detached, semi-detached, and terraced, create different spatial patterns in a neighbourhood. An apartment evokes different sensations to a house of a similar size. A house may have a garden and therefore a relationship between inside and outside could exist that might not be a feature of an apartment (Cooper 1974).

The access to a house is by a clear **threshold** i.e. entrance or access from the street, which serves to define territory. This threshold varies in different cultures and periods. In some houses, users may enter through a different hierarchy of spaces. Front and back help to differentiate formal and informal visiting patterns. The entrances could be used for separate functions or categories of people (Rapoport 1969). The meaning of house is believed to lie in the relationships between the features of the building on the one hand and people's aspirations on the other (Heathcote 2012). House is fundamentally about performance attributes e.g. fitness for purpose, building utilisation and buildability, and as **climatic modifier** of temperature and ventilation, illuminance, sound, energy utilisation, which affect the operational efficiency of the building (Giddings & Holness 1996).

Although fulfilment of these performance attributes is essential, they are lower orders of design aspiration. House also provides its users with space for their belongings (Hillier & Hanson 1984). The study of house is significant as it helps in understanding that physical characteristics are important in that they afford different options for people and therefore impact on

the quality of life. The variety of houses presents a complex picture in which there may be a desire to be what is perceived as upwardly mobile. In this scenario, the trend could be from apartment to terraced house to semi-detached house to detached house. Alternatively, it could be from a house with no recognisable style to one with a distinctive style, often historical.

The end goal could be a city loft apartment or a cottage in the country. Aspirations are a multi-faceted as there are numbers of people and there is no standard profile for what people want as a house. However, each individual has a life cycle, and it is the response to this life cycle that influences demand for particular house types. Aspirations generate what is perceived as upward movement. As in Shakespeare's seven ages of man, around the sixth age what is commonly called downsizing may take place.

It is the nature of this downsizing that requires particular care. As people age, they often choose low-density housing neighbourhoods in market towns to meet their requirements for safe streets and good public services (Rapoport 1985). In all the ages of man, people invariably

seek out their own age group and social class for re-assurance. This need seems to strengthen with age and close homogenous communities are sought.

#### 4.5 Home

This section examines the concept of home and the ideas, interpretations and meanings associated with it. Home represents practical and psychological components of the way people live, or would like to live. Many scholars have long contributed to debates about what constitutes home, and what constitutes the qualities of home (e.g. Cooper 1974; Hayward 1975; Porteous 1976; Appleyard 1979). Studies in environmental psychology have established that home has discrete social, personal, physical, and cultural qualities, although these qualities can be integrated to such an extent that they are difficult to unpick (Despres 1991; Sixsmith 1986). In this sense, it is not simply to build a house, but to dwell in and create a complete environment to which its residents are attached. Home is defined by the way people make their world meaningful (Heidegger 1962; 1971). It provides the primary anchor for an individual (Rapoport 1990) as well as the primary functions of security, safety,

comfort and shelter. Home has symbolic and latent meanings that are internalised by its residents (Rapoport 1995). It offers psychological reassurance as well as satisfying physiological needs. These are specific to individuals and essentially intangible concepts.

Seminal writings on the meaning of the notion of home (e.g. by Hayward 1975; Despres 1991; Dovey 1985) provide knowledge regarding the human-environment relationship. Alexander (1977) emphasises that domestic built environments connect individuals to their surroundings in an infinite number of ways, most of which are subconscious. For this reason, it is significant to determine what works, what feels pleasant, what is psychologically beneficial, and what appeals. Home should incorporate a wide variety of personal values - such as aspiration, motivation, physical well-being and lifestyle choices (Hayward 1975; Feldman 1990).

A taxonomy of meanings (Figure 4.4) provides a more comprehensive profile of the notion of home from a number of identified categories. The meanings include relationships with family and friends, refuge from the outside world,

Identified categories	No.	Authors	Different meaning of home
Identity	1	Cooper 1974	Symbol of self
	2	Hayward 1975	Home is a primary territory (personal control/ privacy), self-identity, social and cultural significance.
	3	Altman 1975;1976	Privacy, emphasising the aspect of control
	4	Porteous 1976	Personalization ; form of presentation of self
	5	Relph 1976	Self identity and human existence
	6	Seamon1979	Warmth, care and cosiness experienced in the atmosphere at home
	7	Sixsmith 1986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>emotional environment; ownership and symbolizes family life and happiness</li> <li>symbol of self</li> <li>and quality of social relationships</li> </ul> Privacy, security and freedom at home permit a significant range of self- expression.
	8	Douglas 1991	Bringing spaces under control
	9	Despres 1991	Social relationships, refuge, security, sense of belonging and self identify
Privacy/ Freedom over space /Safety and Security	10	Appleyard 1979	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comfort and satisfaction</li> <li>Provide social as well as psychological needs</li> </ul>
	11	Dovey 1985	Security, independence, privacy, comfort, identity, status, and connectedness
	12	Lawton 1985	Control over space
	13	Tognoli 1987	Feeling of privacy and refuge but allows a range of social relationships
	14	Saunders and Williams 1988	Privacy at home references to freedom from surveillance
	15	Giuliani 1991	Mere presence, vicinity or accessibility of the object
	16	Smith 1994	Personal freedom and privacy
	17	Rapoport 1995	Entity that separates private from public domains.
	18	Dupuis & Thorns 1998	Where ontological security is maintained
	19	Moore 2000	Privacy, comfort, security and refuge
Social relationships	20	Norberg-Schulz 1965	Territorial function, a social & cultural function and a protective function
	21	Rowles 1983	Personal experience and familiarity
	22	Lawrence 1987	Focus for a range of social networks along with protection to the inhabitants
	23	Werner 1992	Privacy, as the setting for the enhancement and support of a range of interpersonal relationships.
	24	Somerville 1997	Home is a multidimensional concept ; shelter; hearth; heart; privacy; roots; abode and paradise (the ideal).

Figure: 4.4 A taxonomy of meanings.

security and control, modifying the house, permanence and continuity, indicator of personal status, and a reflection of one's ideas and values (Hayward 1975; Dovey 1985; Despres 1991; Rapoport 1995). All the authors included in the table have in common that they acknowledge home as a complex, multi-faceted and multi-layered concept, where different connotations can occur interchangeably and/or simultaneously. Home is not merely a place to live, it is a way of weaving life into particular geographic space and in this way, it is observed as a holistic entity comprising three inter-related qualities of people, environment and time (Figure 4.5). Home transcends the material characteristics of domestic space. It is not a neutral space but fulfils a role as the setting for social relationships. It gives its inhabitants comfortable spaces, but also spaces where they can bring a sense of order to their lives. Home is identified as place, in which people can be more themselves than in any other space (Cooper 1974; Hayward 1975; Dovey 1985; Despres 1991). In addition, the residents give a sense of identity to the place they call home and they draw their identity from it. Finally, home also has to be a physical entity i.e. house where people undertake their daily activities.

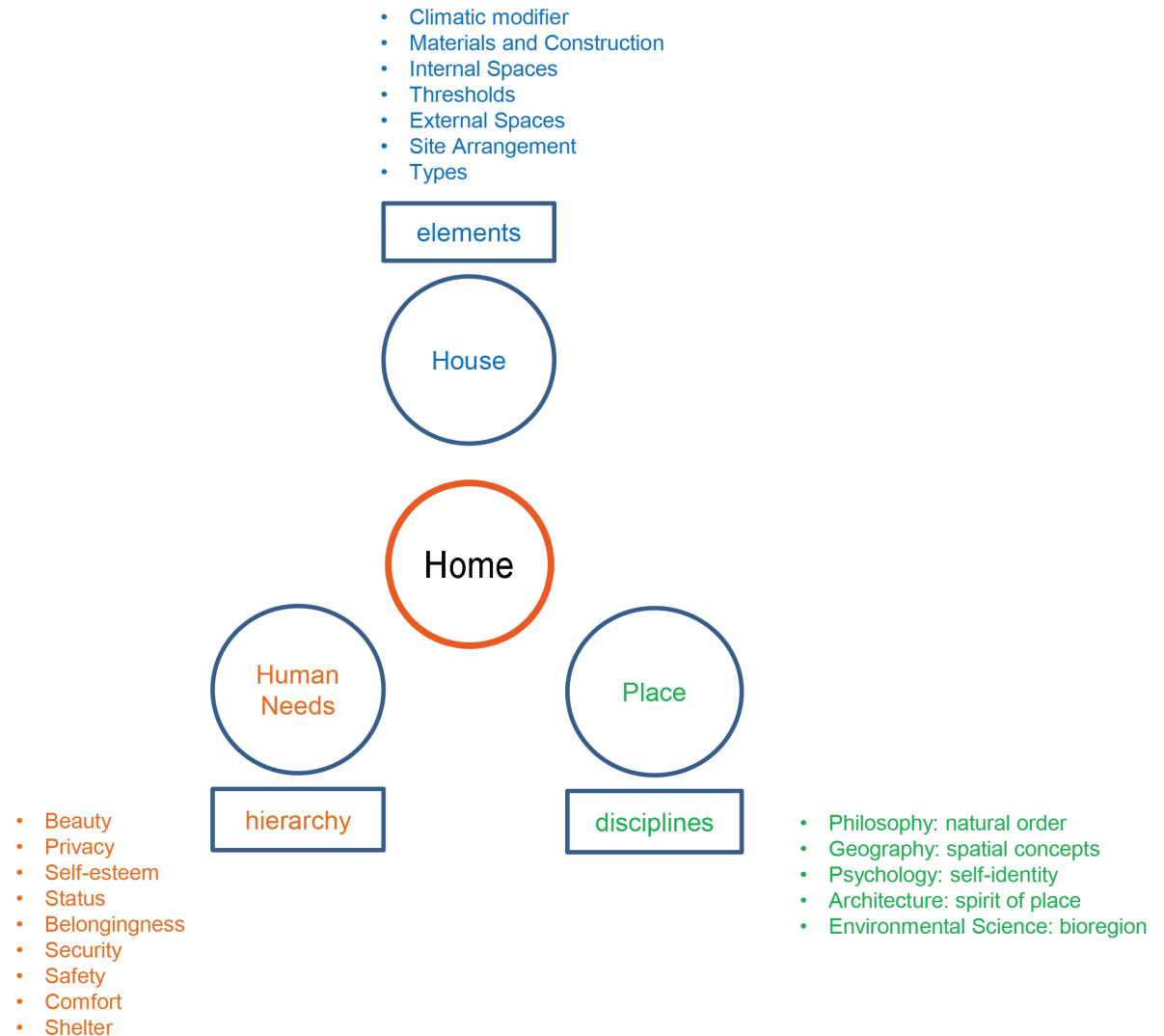


Figure: 4.5 A diagram of the interrelated elements that contribute to home.



#### 4.6 The Culture of Home in England

Altman (1975), Identifies home as a primary territory, offering residents a sense of security not found in other locations. This is reflected in English culture (Lewis 2014) and highlights the maxim - An Englishman's Home is his Castle, in reference to its origin in English law. This was enshrined in 1604, stating that no one can break into or enter a private house without the owner's consent. This was further reinforced by the Attorney General who stated that 'The house of everyone is to him as his castle and fortress, as well as for his defense against injury and violence, as for his repose'. This proclamation can be seen as the root of notions of home in England. The first aspect dealing with safety within one's home and the second with feeling at ease in the home environment. This is reflective of notions of security and privacy attached to home in England.

Home is representative of status and taste in England, with different class connotations associated with age, style location and decor. The English need for individuality is the key relationship. It is reflective of social position and aspiration as well as personal expression

(Ward 2004). A commitment to the home particularly if it is owned manifests its self in terms of décor and embellishment, which is associated with a sense of control and pride. This is perhaps reflected in the way in which homes are occupied. Cohen (2006) draws upon the reality of home life in England and the intentions of the architects and/or developers producing homes which are visualized as being uncluttered and efficient, which contrasts with the reality of their habitation. He states that particularly within a suburban setting, there is a tendency to fill a home rather than opt for more minimal surroundings. Mathesius (1904) comments on the amount of time English people spend in the home, in comparison to other European countries; with English people tending to prefer a night at home rather than attending events.

This can still be attributed to a number of factors but comfort and the English climate are two significant aspects (Lewis 2014). These factors along with attitudes to home ownership contribute to a culture which has focused on domestic consumption. Companies such as Habitat and latterly IKEA have shaped taste within England, incorporating modern artefacts into an English home environment, which

is more associated with interpretations of traditional aesthetics. Lefebvre (1991) comments on the strive for individuality, stating that to the consumer, objects that fill our homes are seen as unique to the individual; they all share a resemblance due to their manufacture. Referencing the past is part of the historic relationship with home, and narratives played out within these spaces contribute further to a continuity of habitation. However, where houses are perceived in terms of style or construction, they represent a continuation and evolution of the idea of home (Heathcote 2012).

This has been particularly emphasized in the past, in relation to English taste and the domestic environment across the classes. Different interpretations of what can be termed traditional styles appear in relation to class and status. A newly built house might have a farmhouse style kitchen complete with range and Belfast sink, where as a Georgian property may have a modernist inspired kitchen placed within a historic setting (Moran 2005). Millar (1987) states that it is possible to read someone's, occupation, class, gender and politics, quite accurately through examining their home environment and the material culture within it.

## 4.7 Conclusion

Establishing a coherent picture of home is difficult to achieve, as there are so many factors involved in its production and use (Moore, 2000; Heatcote, 2006; Blunt and Dowling 2006). In exploring the differences between house and home, the primary differentiation can be placed between the physical form of house and the experiential qualities of home. The idea of home is so intertwined with human experience that there is difficulty in interpreting it from the perspective of a specific discipline, instead it requires a broader multi-disciplinary examination (Cieraad 1999). Studies in environmental psychology have established that home has discrete social, personal, physical, and cultural qualities, although these qualities can be integrated to such an extent that they are difficult to identify independently (Despres 1991; Sixsmith 1986).

Arguably, house can be seen primarily as a climatic modifier, and as a structure for human interaction with the outside. Oswald and Wahl (2005, p.11), conclude that home is a kind of relationship “transaction” between people and their environment, which changes over time and leads to behavioural, emotional

and cognitive bonding with place, as a meaningful physical setting. The use of design guidance in the next chapter, relates to many aspects discussed within this chapter. Issues of identity, style, modification and national attitudes are reflected in design guidance in England. By examining their use and function, it is intended to resolve issues relating to identity and domestic design within England, shaping new methods of design and development which are responsive to location and identity.

## *5.0 Residential Design Guides*

## 5.0 Residential Design Guidance

### 5.1 Introduction

It has been shown in previous chapters that a number of local authorities have responded to speculative housebuilders developing similar houses throughout the country, by publishing their own design guides. It has also been noted that some speculative housebuilders sought to distance themselves from the volume housebuilders, by seeking to promote their dwellings in the same sort of language as these design guides. It has also been shown that a house is a physical structure that provides spaces for residential activities. However, in this instance it is the appearance of the house that determines its credentials for regional expression. Its transformation into a home, is determined primarily by social and cultural qualities that are also part of a region. This chapter will analyse the design guides in terms of regional expression of house and home, and conclude whether or not they provide a framework for regionally responsive design.

As stated in the chapter on Speculative Development, it was the County Planning Officer's concern about the loss of

identity in house design that prompted the development of The Essex Design Guide (1973). This approach to planning control sought to promote architectural design which was more sympathetic with the historic towns and villages of the county. Development was taking place that used materials which were not reflective of the existing built environment. There was also a lack of engagement by developers with issues of scale, orientation and roof shape. It was from these initial observations that the Essex Design Guide was commissioned (Smailes 1991).

It was the intention of the local planning authority to influence potential developers. The guide would also serve to inform and provide assistance for development control officers, in recommending approval or otherwise of proposed schemes. There was also an intent that it would improve the quality of proposals, either by developers following the recommendation themselves, or in negotiation with the planning officers (Punter 1999). The emphasis of the guide was on contextual approaches to design in market towns; which were perceived by Essex County Council to be most vulnerable due to their historic character (Essex Design Initiative 2009). The guide was categorised as a Supplementary

Planning Document; and its role was to suggest the form and appearance of development that would be considered acceptable by the planning authority (Hall 1999). It was hoped that it would influence developers in terms of their approaches to the design and planning of future schemes. Essex County Council (1973), states that its publication is not a form of pattern book and that it should be regarded as a design tool.

The Council sets out the types of houses required and the markets at which they are aimed; the design characteristics of development and perceived impact on the locality; and the requirement that any new development forms part of and affects the community. The examples shown within the Guide reflect what has latterly been termed as Neo-Vernacular (Powers 2008). Whilst the Essex Design Guide (1973) was the forerunner, from which many similar publications grew; it has drawn criticism. It has been seen as promoting an Essex Neo Vernacular throughout the county, resulting in similar approaches being used irrespective of the local context in different parts of Essex. This is primarily linked to the illustrations used within the guide, which show neo-vernacular renderings of properties and



street scenes. The criticism levelled at the guide has claimed that it has created a universal approach to new development in the county (Cullingworth 1999). Whilst the Essex Guide still retains the original illustrations in its current format, this is more closely linked with the heritage of the document (Figure 5.1). It is also the only guidance to produced visuals of this nature, with all the guidance reviewed opting for photographs and illustrations of existing architecture.

The Essex Design Guide prompted other planning authorities to take similar action, producing their own iterations of the Guide. An intensity of focus within residential guidance emerges during the 1990s, under the then Labour government. It has already been noted that Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE 2001) was established to assist best practice in architectural design, planning and construction. It lasted from 1999 to 2011. Part of its remit was the promotion of better design and planning of new residential developments. This was primarily focussed upon urban and suburban areas. Publications such as *Urban Design Compendium*, (2000), sought to improve the master planning of new housing schemes, along with



Figure: 5.1 An image from the original Essex Design Guide, demonstrating the aesthetics of new development. (Essex Design Guide 2007).

promoting more innovative approaches to the integration and connectivity of proposed schemes in relation to the urban areas with which they are associated. While both are light touch in terms of aesthetic considerations, the aim was to create better planned and more integrated housing development; improving the contextualisation of schemes, and taking into account the changes in lifestyle and working patterns for occupants; at the design stage (Carmona and Gallent 2003).

## 5.2 Classification and Distribution of Design Guides

Since the publication of the Essex Design Guide (1973), many local authorities have introduced their own planning guidance. Carmona (2001), provides the most comprehensive analysis of design guides and their classification, classifying them as ‘Traditional’, Design Codes and Character/ Design Area Guides (Figure 5.2).

A survey undertaken as part of this research examined 312 local authorities in England, establishing that 98 of these authorities producing residential design guides (Figure 5.4, matrix of guides assessed, located at the end of the chapter).

Guide Type	Utility
‘Traditional’ <i>Residential Design Guides</i>	Offer the means reflect fully a comprehensive design agenda and authority wide relation of design concerns to context. Where resources allow, the production and updating of local design guides (county or district wide) should be viewed as a priority by officers.
Design Codes	Offer the means to provide concise, accessible statements of authority’s design aspirations, either on a district wide or site specific basis (in the latter case perhaps as a long term framework). Codes are of greatest value where no established urban context (or code) exist.
Character/ Design Area Guides	Offer the opportunity to move design guides beyond the district- wide to an area-specific basis (Hall 1996). However, the resource intensive nature of necessary appraisal suggests that guidance at the district-wide and site-specific levels might be a more appropriate first priority for most local authorities.

Figure: 5.2 Carmona (2001), classification of design guidance primarily by the scale and scope of each publication.

Of these, 30% could be considered as ‘Traditional’ design guides, in terms of their content and scope which correlate with Carmona’s (2001) assessment. With 26% classified as Design Codes and the remaining 44% being classified as Character/ Design Area Guides. The distribution of these design guides correlates with authorities that administer historic towns and village. A majority of the ‘Traditional’ design guides are located in South Eastern England, with Design

Codes and Character/ Design Area Guides being distributed more widely. Of the 98 guides reviewed, 82% guides occur in areas with historic towns and villages. Of these, 45% can be found within central and southern England and correspond with the location of market towns and historic villages (Figure 5.3).

## 5.3 Content of Design Guides

Having catalogued and appraised the



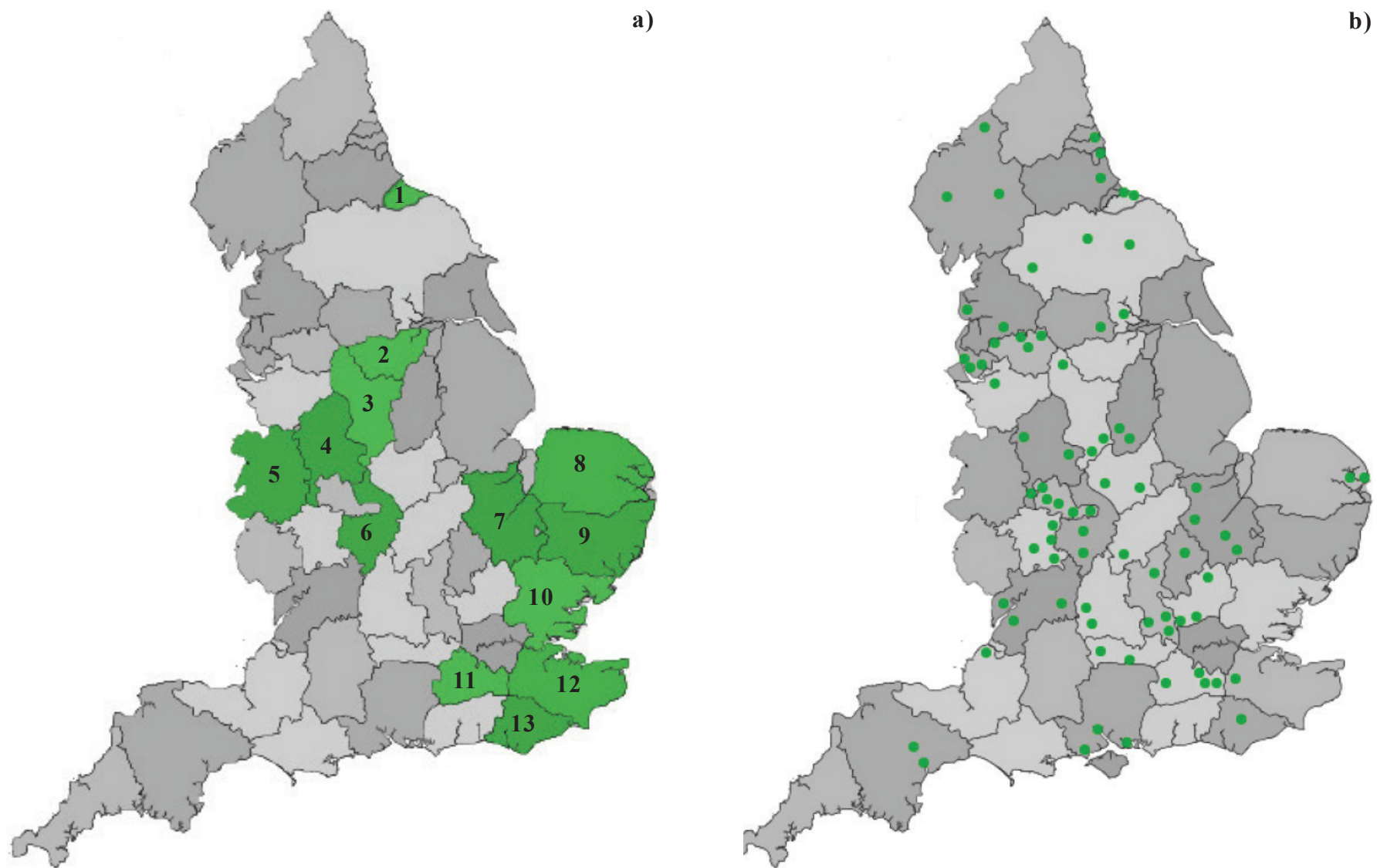


Figure: 5.3 **a)** Key regions in which design guides are located.: 1) Cleveland, 2) South Yorkshire, 3) Derbyshire, 4) Staffordshire, 5) Shropshire, 6) Warwickshire, 7) Cambridgeshire, 8) Norfolk, 9) Suffolk, 10) Essex, 11) Surrey, 12) Kent, 13) East Sussex. **b)** Distribution of design guides, with the highest concentration in Central England.

current residential design guides in England, the Traditional guides offer the most comprehensive guidance. They provide in-depth guidance, providing establishing a comprehensive overview of best practice in planning and design. This mirrors the Essex Design Guide (1973) and more recent publications such as the Urban Design Compendium (2007). The primary focus of Design Codes and Character/ Design Area Guides is placed upon influencing prospective developers to produce schemes which are sympathetic to the historic and natural environment, with an emphasis placed upon the design of the proposed architecture. This approach is particularly associated with smaller areas of historic significance, where there is a want to preserve or enhance the location (Owen 1999).

All of design guides prompt the user to analyse the existing environment, this is often given the cover all term of site analysis and is broken down into constituent components within the guides. 'Traditional' guides which cover larger areas detail the particularities of the natural and built environment in locations covered by the guidance, this is often to the extent of examine the presence and habitat of wildlife associated with

these areas. The level of detail found in these publications correlating with the classification of guide. These sections inform appropriate approaches to design within areas of historic and natural importance, as well as giving more specific examples of the built form.

While design guides seek to inform developers of development of preferred design strategies, they do not have the authority of approved documents or legislation. Instead they are indicative of the approaches local authorities wish potential developers to consider. At present the government's remit for design guides is as follows;

*Local planning authorities should consider using design codes where they could help deliver high quality outcomes. However, design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally, (National Planning Policy Framework 2011).*

The focus of this statement is placed upon urban design and planning, yet much of

the focus of the design guides reviewed is upon the design, detail, material, scale and form of proposed developments. All of the guides reviewed contain sections relating directly to visual appearance and form of properties, that local authorities wish to direct the user towards. Of the guides reviewed 89% establish the importance of aesthetic approach at the start of their publications, though aesthetic is often not directly referred to. Visual appearance is often used in place of aesthetic and is supported by images of existing architecture. A majority of the publications reviewed feature examples of historic architecture within the introduction, establishing the visual appearance of existing buildings. The (National Planning Policy Framework 2011), focusses on the physical practicalities of planning new development and reinforces best practice. Aesthetics is relegated to being low priority, in place of the planning of new developments as illustrated in the following excerpt.

*7.61 Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should*



*address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment,*  
(National Planning Policy Framework 2011).

The aesthetic of new development is key to satisfying the criteria within this statement, as integrating new development into the natural, built and historic environment requires not only sympathetic planning, but an appreciation and reflection of the existing visual context. It is a combination of wider aesthetic considerations, form, detail, material and context which have shaped the regional distinctiveness of many market towns and villages, this is reflected within all of the guidance reviewed.

#### **5.4 Analysis**

In relating the content of the design guides reviewed, to the aims and objectives of the thesis; the identification of key aspects of content which contribute to regional distinctiveness must be established. The focus of regionalism and vernacular study focus on similar criteria to that which is found in design guidance. The primary areas of assessment being material,

form, scale, proportion, detail, aesthetic and context (Brunskill 1971, Frampton 1981 et al). The terminology used to title the sections of the guides and describe aspects of investigation varies, so the appraisal deals with the most commonly used terminology. Design guides can be seen as unique in reflecting the historical/ vernacular study pioneered by Brunskill (1971), but also providing a located examination of regional architecture.

#### **5.5 Character**

The word character is used in 96% guides, in relation to the existing fabric of a town or region and to highlight the uniqueness of a location. It is an important aspect of the terminology in the design guides and is used as a catch all term to describe the different factors which contribute to the nature of the town or area described. It is used within the introductory text of 96% of the guides, with specific character sections forming the introductions of 56% of the guides reviewed. The use of character in the guides tends to act as an edited version of sections concerned with context and materiality. The character guides mirror this establishing a short but comprehensive overview of the geographic and architectural and historic context.

The focus of character sections and its use in design guides occurs in relation to, materiality, form and scale, natural environment and aim to establish these key considerations as an initial starting point for the user. Introducing the user to these considerations and summarising the general approach that should be taken with regard to design in these areas.

The use of character in the design guides establishes with the reader the historic and cultural importance of a town and the unique qualities present. It is also suggestive of age, while there is no definition given in the guides, used in relation to domestic architecture, is often expressive of this (Owen 1998). When an environment is described as possessing character, it has stood and weathered the tests of time and physically reflects the habitation that has occurred, the underlying message is that change may be detrimental to this. The character of many towns can be seen to develop through use, buildings adapt and morph to suit and serve the occupants, with time shaping the ever changing pattern of use and modification (Lawson 2001).

The term locally distinctive, is often used in relation to character, further

highlighting the importance of a considered and informed approach the design process. With potential development drawing influence from the existing environment and sympathetically interpreting this in new developments. The use of character, locally distinctive are used to emphasise similar qualities of uniqueness, implying that the places within the guides which are described in this manner unlike anywhere else and therefore precious in a sense, or are to be preserved. Its use is within the design guides is strongly linked with ideas of local identity, which is seldom explored beyond representations of the existing architectural fabric of a place.

## **5.6 Context**

A context section appears in all of the guides reviewed but varies in detail and scope, dependant on the type of guide. In some guidance this section is referred to as the site appraisal in both instances they focus on examining the historic, geographic and physical context of a specific place or geographic area. They include details of local restrictions on development which should form part of the site appraisal by a prospective developer. While the use of character in the guides establishes an introduction of overview of

the contextual content, it is these sections reinforce and elaborate on this content. It is generally regarded as the foundation for developers to further their understanding of a location or town, often referred to as establishing the characteristics of a location and producing a suitable design response.

The contextual guidance is generally presented as a visual survey and seeks to establish key aspects of the built and natural environment. The visual content of these sections varies, with all the guides presenting images of existing/historic architecture and 22% showing examples of contemporary development alongside historic examples. Information of the placement of new development and the consideration of topography and geographic features also occur within these sections. Context sections serve to inform a developer of what is present within a given area and highlight the key considerations that should be made in producing a planning proposal tailored to the location.

## **5.7 Material**

All of the design guidance reviewed places an emphasis upon material, detailing the

local materiality that has shaped the areas they concern. This is often presented in terms of swatches, with descriptions and examples of their use in the historic buildings, to assist prospective developers in their material specification. In 10% of the guides reviewed this extends to the use of colour palettes, to control the colour spectrum of materials used in new development. The treatment and finish of the materials is also an important factor in 45% of the guides. They encourage the developer to specify materials which are similar in, type, scale and proportion to those found in proximity to new development. 'Traditional' guides detail material variation over the areas they cover, with the geological difference between areas being highlighted and guidance provided on the correct type of stone and roofing material to be used.

The prevalence of material sections within the guides, is indicative of the importance invested in materiality as a means of incorporating new development into historic environments. There is an acknowledgement of the practicalities of specifying traditional materials in design guides, with 60% of the guides advising on the careful specification of substitute materials. It is not only the material cost,

but the expertise required in processing and building in traditional materials which contribute to the limited number of developments which can fully incorporate traditional materials and construction.

## **5.8 Detail**

Detail is incorporated into the material sections of 59% of the guides reviewed, with 38% containing specific detail sections. Detail appears in all types of guide reviewed. These sections or text associated with detail are in all instances accompanied with images, all of the guides reviewed used historic of detailing with contemporary examples used, mirroring earlier development. Only two guides show contemporary design in this context, but fail to engage with how they might be deemed suitable in terms of detail and material specification. The main areas of focus being the façade and fenestration, elements which dictate the overall appearance of a building.

The specification of elements which reflect period properties, is the primary focus. There is particular attention paid to the façade and openings, with the reveal being identified as key consideration. A majority of the guides caution against

the placement of glazing units' flush with the façade, as this diminishes the reveal and the articulation of the façade through shadow. The majority of guides reviewed required new properties to use similar window casements to existing properties. With 72% of guides cautioning against the use of PVC windows and doors. Advice on the placement and type of lintels and sills is discussed in 60% of the guides reviewed, which all seek the developer to reference existing examples.

Detailing of masonry is another aspect of the façade covered within the guides, 76% of which provide information on the correct brick types and colours. The coursing of brickwork along with the arrangement of stone work, reference the existing context. The level of guidance varies with traditional and character guides producing very specific information on masonry application, covering elements such as quoins, cornices and friezes. Wider aspects of detailing primarily focus on historical detail and occur in 68% of the guides reviewed. Elements such as ironmongery, barge boards, guttering are identified as being key aspects of detailing, in terms of their relevance to the existing architecture of a given location.

What could be termed as external details feature primarily in traditional guides, the material and detail of hard surfacing is covered; as well as appropriate specification of boundaries. As with the material sections found in the guides, this promotes an approximation of components and detail elements, as the specification of original or facsimile elements is as acknowledged as costly. The detail sections within the guides promote a continuity with the existing built environment and even acknowledge the cost of this, however 74% of the guides suggest the use of substitute details and materials contributing to approximation rather than facsimile.

## **5.9 Form, Scale & Proportion**

Of the guides reviewed, all examine aspects of form, scale and proportion; the subject matter is dealt with under differing sections and headings. Of the guides reviewed all represent the information differently, with the information expressed through diagramming and photographs. The use of case studies, occurs 40% of the guides, these tend to deal with aspects of proportion, scale and form. All of the guides reference historic examples or forms.

## *Form*

As with other subject matter, the information dealing with form, often incorporates other aspects of design, such as scale and height. As a specific section form appears in 42% of the guides reviewed, but is referred to in all. In guides with specific sections, form covers the overall shape of existing buildings detailing roof pitches, the arrangement and grouping of houses. The principals are primarily communicated through diagramming and supporting text. In the majority of character guides and design codes, form is discussed in more general terms and generally prompts the user to examine existing buildings. There is little definition of form within the guides, instead visual analysis is used to communicate the overall characteristics of building approaches.

## *Scale*

All of the guides the focus on buildings and landscaping relating to pedestrian or human scale. Scale is also in conjunction with height, with a consensus across the guides that new development should mirror the height and proportions of older developments. More detailed descriptions

define scale as being the height, width and depth of a building and the relative size of the openings and component parts to the whole. Scale is also associated with introducing legibility to new development in 25% of the guides, referencing older buildings such as churches as being visual markers and focal points, encouraging new development to incorporate landmark buildings to aid legibility. There is however little explanation of the benefit of doing so, especially as historic landmark buildings tend to be civic rather than residential. The primary concern with all the guides with regard to scale, is that new development is integrated into an existing environment in a cohesive manner. That new development should reflect the existing environment, further reinforcing the emphasis on the historic context.

## *Proportion*

Proportion can be explained as being the relationship of comparative parts to a whole, in architectural terms this can be seen as a desired geometric relationship (Moore and Allen 1976). There is little definition in the design guides of proportion, it is often mentioned in relation to scale, which is primarily concerned with the relative size of objects

or components often in relation to the human form. Proportion is presented using differing approaches which vary from guide to guide, in some instances; the use of proportion is interchangeable with scale. Proportion is primarily communicated within the general design text of many of the guides, with 25% of the guides providing more detailed analysis. Diagramming is primarily used to explore the proportion, with a majority of the guides focussing on proportional systems used in existing architecture. These examine rhythm and composition with emphasis on the façade treatment. The focus of this primarily upon existing housing dating from the Georgian era and later. The emphasis is placed on vertically proportioned openings, with guidance on horizontal openings tending to limit their use to façades with a vertical emphasis such as gables. The overall aim of the guidance is to achieve a harmony between the roof height and solid wall and with the openings placed in it.

## *Street Scene*

Street scene is used within the guides to unify many of the principals discussed, ideas of form, scale, proportion, material and context are unified under this term.



Specific sections are dedicated to this in 32% of the guides, however the term appears in a majority of the guides. In 65% of the guides street scene is also used to explain principals regarding the arrangement housing and its relationship with the street. It is primarily descriptive of the existing environment and is used as a means of directing the user to produce schemes which consider not only the component principals, but also the existing street scenes as a whole. This is in essence and exercise in scenography and how through the unification of these ideas and examples. Demonstrating how development can incorporate elements of the local architectural approaches to produce new housing, which retains enough local characteristics.

## 5.10 Conclusion

Having reviewed the design guides all serve to shape the design of new developments, in areas which have a strong historic identity. The focus of which tends to be market towns and villages, which by the nature of their development demonstrate a historic continuity of development and regional character. The focus of all the guides reviewed is the existing characteristics of

the environments they concern and how best to incorporate new development. This focuses much of the content of the guides on the existing built environment, which in turn means that the concepts and principals communicated are re-enforcing the existing architectural characteristics.

The guides all present a case for the uniqueness of the environments they concern, whilst region is dealt with in more general terms to denote the area they cover. The subject matter and principals conveyed within the design guides can be seen as an approach to regional architecture. All of the guides are located studies of the built and natural environment they concern, which largely mirror aspects of design identified by regional theorists. There is a consensus between theorists such as Frampton (1981), and the design guides in cautioning against pastiche, of the design guides reviewed 78% express this. There is very little analysis or instruction within the guides as to how this can be avoided.

All of the guides reviewed placing an emphasis on material specification, as a means of incorporating new development into the fabric of existing towns and villages. This emphasis on materiality

and its importance to continuity within new development, adds to the problem of sympathetically building within these environments. The specification of local stone occurs in many of the guides and identified as being significant to the locations and regions they represent. The use of local materials is expensive, in addition to material cost the need for traditional skills further adding to the cost. This problem is reflected in the guides, with some specifically stating that substitute material can be specified and should be a good match with the existing materiality. The use of modern manufactured alternatives the product of an industrial process and carry a degree of standardisation. This results in a formalisation of materials, introducing a uniformity that was not present historically.

It is the want to emulate traditional and historic housing which is problematic in the present. Traditional buildings are expressive of material limitations that existed historically, along with the buildings function that have dictated the overall form and scale of a building. In the present more formalised and controlled production of building components allow for different forms to be explored.

Historically the limits of construction were tied to material properties this dictated the development of historic buildings (Brunskill 2000). Whilst advances in technology have led to greater uniformity than was present historically. What is reflected in traditional are the material limitations of the time in which it was produced, which with the use of modern materials and components cannot be reproduced.

What contributes to the regional character of the historic settings and how to retain this, are central to the design guides. One contributory factor is the behaviour of natural materials over an extended period time. The change of shape, surface, hue and texture are all important characteristics in how old buildings are perceived in-situ. None of the design guides deal with the issues in terms of specification in the present and the changing nature of materiality and use. The response to the local environment by many developers has been specifying an external finish which approximates material finishes. Whilst a great amount of detail is placed upon specification and detailing within the guides, the caveat of expense makes substitute material and detail specification common place (Samuels 1994).

Whilst there is some sense of an awareness of pastiche, there is also a desire to preserve these environments and a suggestion of replicating what is present. One of the guides surveyed is very conservative example of this, it uses *perfection* to describe the existing environment leaves little room for new development; how can you add or improve upon perfection? It could also be viewed as promoting schemes of minimal visual impact, what emerges with many of the guides is a reticence to allow change within historic centres. Examples of contemporary design are featured within some guides, but on closer inspection they exist within isolation. Often at the periphery of a town or village, separated from what could be termed the historic or traditional environment the guides are attempting to engineer.

The origin of much of the guidance content, is unclear in a majority of the guides, with only 5% including a bibliography. Many design guides share similar content. Many guides seem to ape each other, borrowing aspects and sections, simply repackaging them with localised information. National planning guidance and publications, are referenced as a footnote in many of the design guides;

but without specific reference to the content used. The authority that design guides possess is somehow diminished by a lack of clear origin to the information contained, as it raises the question of what knowledge or experience is shaping attitudes towards development these areas? The complexities of building and designing within historic areas are many, yet the knowledge transmitted is incomplete. Without the referencing of source material, there is no real notion of the analysis and practice which have informed the approaches taken.

There is an underlying subtext to many guides which is expressed overtly in some and more subtly in others, that deviation too far away from what is present is not acceptable. The language used in the guides contributes to this, terms such as *tradition* and *character* are implicit of uniqueness and a sense of permanence. They convey a sense that these environments are already complete; to the extent that impositions which do not conform to the existing physical characteristics threaten this balance. Design guides are obstructing rather than promoting a sense of evolution and development, the implicit constraints restrict responses to the present?

Whilst design guides imply that contemporary architecture is preferable to attempting to copy the past, this is not reaffirmed by the projects featured. Examples of surviving architecture or street scenes are a selected by the authors of design guides. This is with a view to reflecting what they feel is most representative of a given area. What emerges is a cherry picked selection of the buildings which present, an idealised vision of a location. Examples of contemporary development where included are secondary to the historic content of the guides. There is very little evidence of an engagement with contemporary architecture, of the 5% of guides which give more detailed analysis of contemporary schemes the examples are still representative of an approach to development which is retrospective and primarily influenced by Georgian and Victorian architecture.

There is no real attempt in any of the guides to establish a chronology of development or contextualise the different styles and periods represented as being traditional. While there may be a concentration of historic buildings from a particular period in the centre of a town, they are rarely unaccompanied by later

additions or amendments. In relation to the approaches demonstrated in the guidance, new development cannot emulate this kind of add hock historic development. What emerges is the notion that places may be spoilt by new development, unless it copies the existing. The conditions which brought about historic towns no longer exist, with different factors shaping their growth in the present.

What design guides contribute to regional architecture, is a tangible means of influencing residential development which responds and engages with ideas of regional and local identity. The retrospective nature of the content is understandable given the environments they cover, but it is a lack of engagement with contemporary architecture and materiality; provides little onus on prospective developers to engage with these environments in new or imaginative ways. An engagement with past styles is not reflective of the environments they cover, as historical changes in technology and taste are reflected.

In the present there are many pressures on market towns and villages with increasing demand for housing on a local national level. Therefore, an historic development

is in part tied to their economic success. Many market towns rely upon tourism which is directly linked to their historic and regional identity. From the Essex Design Guide (1973) onwards the focus has been placed upon preserving the unique qualities of the built and natural environment which have contribute to the character of market towns. Through further understanding their development and their function in the present a more constructive means of design framework can be developed, which can contribute to a more regionally responsive approach to residential design in the market towns.

**Figure: 5.4 Matrix of Design Guides**

England	Guide	Sustainability	Character	Context	Material	Density	Detail	Form	Street
<b>Bedfordshire</b>									
Central Bedfordshire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Berkshire</b>									
West Berkshire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Wokingham</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>South Buckinghamshire</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Milton Keynes	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Chilterns</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Wycombe	•			•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Cambridgeshire</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cambridge	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Huntingdonshire</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
South Cambridgeshire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Peterborough	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Cheshire</b>									
Halton	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Cleveland</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Hartlepool	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Middlesborough	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
<b>County Durham</b>									
Durham City	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Cumbria</b>									
Borough of Allerdale	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
District of Eden	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Carlisle	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Derbyshire</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Amber Valley									
Erewash	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
High Peak	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
South Derbyshire	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	
<b>Devon</b>									
Exeter City	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Mid Devon	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•



	Guide	Sustainability	Character	Context	Material	Density	Detail	Form	Street
<b>Dorset</b>									
Purbeck	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bournemouth	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>East Sussex</b>	•	•	•	•		•	•		
Wealden	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Essex</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Harlow	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Gloucestershire</b>									
Cotswold	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Stroud	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Forest of Deane	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Greater Manchester</b>									
Oldham	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Rochdale	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Salford	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Wigan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
<b>Hampshire</b>									
Havant	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
New Forest	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Southampton	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Herefordshire</b>									
<b>Hertfordshire</b>									
Watford	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Welwyn Hatfield	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Stevenage	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Isle of White</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Kent</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Lancashire</b>									
West Lancashire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Chorley	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Leicestershire</b>									
Oadby & Wigston	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Hinkley & Bosworth	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

	Guide	Sustainability	Character	Context	Material	Density	Detail	Form	Street
<b>London</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Merseyside</b>									
Liverpool	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Sefton	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
St Helens	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
<b>Norfolk</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Great Yarmouth	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Broadland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>North Yorkshire</b>									
Selby	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Craven	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Hambleton	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Rydale	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Northamptonshire</b>									
South Northamptonshire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
<b>Northumbria</b>									
Northumbeland Coast ANOB	•								
Corbridge	•	•	•	•	•		•		
<b>Nottinghamshire</b>									
Rushcliffe	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Nottingham	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
<b>Oxfordshire</b>									
Vale of the White Horse	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
West Oxfordshire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Shropshire</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Somerset</b>									
North Somerset	•			•		•	•		•
<b>South Yorkshire</b>	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	
<b>Staffordshire</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
South Staffordshire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Newcastle Under Lyme	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		

	Guide	Sustainability	Character	Context	Material	Density	Detail	Form	Street
East Staffordshire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
<b>Suffolk</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Surrey</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Elmbridge	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Guilford	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Reigate & Banstead	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Tanbridge	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Tyne &amp; Wear</b>									
Gateshead	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Newcastle Upon Tyne	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Sunderland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
<b>Warwickshire</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Stratford on Avon	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Warwick	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
<b>West Midlands</b>									
Birmingham	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Coventry	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sandwell	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Solihull	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Wolverhampton	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>West Sussex</b>									
<b>West Yorkshire</b>									
Wakefield	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Leeds	•								
<b>Worcestershire</b>									
Worcester	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bromsgrove	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Redditch	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Wychavon	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

## *6.0 The Development of Market Towns in England*



## 6.0 The Development of Market Towns in England

### 6.1 Introduction

Market towns are representative of a pre-industrial past in England. In many instances their centres have retained much of their historic character and architecture. They still provide a focal point for rural communities and continue in some cases, to perform their traditional functions of agricultural trade. They have retained at their core, a pattern of development which occurred prior to industrialisation. These historic centres have become focal points, as their character is cited as being key to local identity and an integral part of tourist economies (Powe, Hart and Bek 2009). The character and identity of market towns is informed by the successive communities that have inhabited them. Thus, the architectural significance of market towns is rooted in their pre-industrial past and its preservation (Brunskill 2001, Clifton-Taylor 1978).

In the present, market towns reflect a historic pattern of settlement, which developed from agricultural and commercial trade. They are associated with overland routes in England, some of which

can be traced back to the Bronze Age or earlier. The network of roads created during the Roman period have continued to be in use. Many settlements developed in relation to these routes, where trading communities were established. Settlements which developed during the Roman period were not only agricultural, but supported many industries associated with local resources (Aston 1985).

The location of many market towns correlates with natural stopping points between larger settlements. Trade and centralisation of commerce are two key aspects which have shaped many existing market towns and were significant in their location and growth. The development of market towns is inextricably linked with the development of villages and hamlets, as they provided mutually supportive networks (Cunliffe 2013, Aston 1985).

### 6.2 Locating Settlement

Many market towns have their roots in earlier forms of settlement, such as villages and farmsteads. Communication in terms of overland routes provided opportunities for trade and control of certain areas. It is a complex and often interconnected set of criteria and circumstance, which

has dictated location. Many other factors contributed to the location of settlements. The following contributory factors have been identified by Aston (1994), Banks (1963), Darby (1976), (Hall 2014), Hoskins (2013), Nagle (1998), Rippon (2004), Roberts (1986, 2003), Roberts and Wrathmell (2002).

**Water** or *wet points*, springs, sources of running fresh water and ground water.

**Flooding**, a key consideration in establishing a location, in geographic terms areas which are not susceptible to flooding are termed *dry points*.

**Resources**, for example, timber, metals, coal, stone.

**Agricultural**, land, pasture, fertile; South facing slopes for cultivation.

**Food**, areas of foraging and good hunting grounds.

**Topographical**, flat land provided ease of access and construction, whereas elevated land provided a defensible position.

**Geographical**, informed the development, locations on rivers where they can be

bridged or forded, locations on estuaries and river mouths and natural harbours, where resources could be found and movement could be controlled.

**Climate**, location of settlements, avoiding exposure to prevailing winds being a key consideration in their location.

It is often a combination of these factors that have determined places of settlement. Certain criteria have contributed to the success and growth of settlements, as well as their decline. Proximity to natural resources and the development of industries have been key aspects that have dictated the success and growth of many settlements. It is also with the establishment of early settlements that localised collective identities have been formed, in relation to territory. The delineation of boundaries and notions of ownership and belonging, also contribute to regional cultural identities.

### 6.3 Settlement Patterns

These can be used to describe a number of instances, in relation to the variety of elements which contribute to market towns (Figure 6.1). There are three primary settlement patterns identified by

geographers:

*Dispersed Settlement* - generally occurs in locations that are sparsely populated. They are characterised by the slow and gradual unification of separate individual properties and land, in most

cases agricultural. Geographically they develop from farms or houses which are contained in their own land and are spread out, away from roads. It is the expansion of these farms and houses in relation to road networks which brings about their unification and growth.

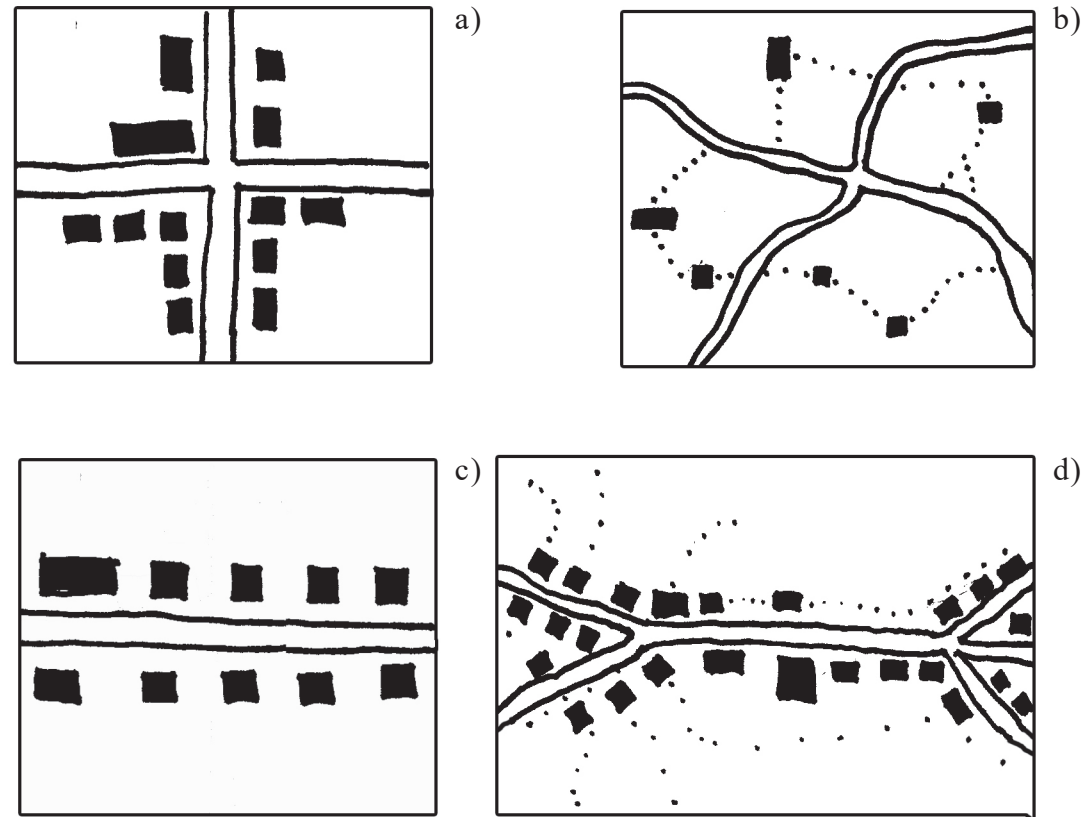


Figure 6.1: The primary settlement patterns, a) **nucleated**, buildings locate around a central point or crossroads, b) **dispersed**, developed in a more ad-hock fashion, from farms, c) **linear**, usually develops in relation to roads, d) **polyfocal**, has more than one central point, can occur through villages or hamlets growing towards one-another.

*Nucleated Settlement* - generally occurs in relation to focal points, primarily market places and long established churches or high status buildings. In many instances, these focal points appear in relation to one another and in close proximity. Settlements of this type generally occur in relation to road networks.

*Poly Focal Settlement*, - can be seen as a more closely spaced version of the *dispersed settlement* pattern, in which key buildings or features merge to form a market town.

Whilst these categories are generalised, most settlements have developed from one or more of these typologies. In some cases, all three typologies may be evident in the development of a settlement. The understanding of these typologies facilitates enquiry, providing a means of establishing the formation and growth of a settlement (Darby 1976).

## Settlement Form

The form of settlements can be defined in three distinct types. They correspond with roads and communal spaces. Form provides a further layer of understanding



Figure 6.2: Wimborne St Giles Doset, Village Green. This is the archetypal image of a village green, with the parish church and housing opening directly on to it.

and links market towns with their surroundings. It is inextricably linked to overland routes and a wider network of communication and interaction between settlements:

*Linear Form* - houses and other buildings are arranged along a road.

*Cruciform* - houses and other buildings are arranged around a crossroads and radiate

from it.

*Green* - houses and other buildings are arranged around a central green (Figure 6.2).

The form of a settlement may take on more than one of these characteristics. However, in it is the original form that dictates its interpretation.

## 6.4 The Formalisation of Market Towns

Market Towns developed throughout Europe during the medieval period, as a means of centralising agricultural trade in rural areas. The principle of market towns was not new, but the formalisation of their function and status was significant to their growth. The Anglo Saxon influence on patterns of settlement is still reflected in many market towns. The church became the focal point of many settlements in this period. Its centralised location formed a focal point for development and community. The names of many market towns demonstrate that they were created in this period. For example, the term *wic* was used in Old English to denote a town, as in - Berwick, Keswick, Wickham Market and Wickham Bishops. Whereas *Chipping* refers to a market or market place. These are reflected in place names such as - Chipping Warden, Chipping Sudbury (Pryor 2011).

A majority of market towns developed from existing centres of trade and commerce. In the Norman period a policy of establishing new towns occurs, many of which would later develop into the present larger urban centres. This Norman policy was known as *planted towns* and started

in the South of England after 1066. Many of these settlements instigated growth by association, providing the impetus for the development of many market towns. Planted towns developed as a means of controlling areas of the country through fortification and settlement, along with the levying of taxes in rural areas. These settlements steadily grew, acting as larger trading centres and areas of production and industry (Smith-Morris 1997).

The formalisation of market towns occurs in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, with status being awarded to existing settlements by Royal decree. There was a sustained rural growth in England during this period, with existing towns achieving market town status and new market towns emerging. This was, in part, due to substantial grants for the development of 2800 new markets, paid for by the English Crown. Of these grants, over half were made between 1200-1275, with market towns being valuable sources of revenue and taxation, (Smith-Morris 1997).

During the medieval period, roads were developed, often on top of existing Roman and Pre Roman routes, facilitating further growth. Overland travel for trade was reasonably efficient in this period and

helped facilitate growth inland, often in association with commodities such as wool. Access to market was key to national economics. Investment in market towns, along with targeted investment in the road network, benefitted the access of produce to market. This facilitated both domestic and international trade with more efficient distribution to larger regional centres. It is through the support of the Crown that market towns were able to consolidate their position as key centres in rural England and further establish their trading relationship with larger settlements and ports (Pryor 2011).

## 6.5 Physical Characteristics

There are several important features of market towns, which have shaped their development and contributed to their character.

### *Thoroughfares*

These were key to the expansion and economic success of market towns. Bringing traders and travellers through a town and connecting it to the wider road network, thoroughfares were devised to move people towards the centre and market place. They are generally the widest routes



through towns and have retained much of their historical architecture. Their size allowed for horse drawn vehicles to pass through centres with relative ease (Barry 1990). These routes through towns, connected to the wider road network, and provided the opportunity for traders to establish shops along them. The width of thoroughfares also provided external space, to display goods. A key economic benefit of businesses and services locating on these routes was that trade occurred outside of market days. The expansion of towns was often in association with the increase in this commercial activity.

### *Market Crosses*

An important contributory factor to wealth in market towns was the growing trade associated with pilgrimage. This was closely linked to both the Church and Crown. Historically a church had been the focal point of many market towns and their spiritual and economic importance grew with pilgrimage. The introduction of market crosses further enhanced towns, as a physical manifestation of Royal charter and legitimacy of status. They were also representative of the wealth of a town, with the size and degree of complexity and ornamentation signifying a town's



Figure 6.3: Adrian Hill (1940) Chichester Market Cross, one of the most elaborate in England and a statement of its importance (collections.vam.ac.uk 2015).

status. Market crosses came not only to mark the centres of many towns, but act as a focal point for the community (Figure 6.3). Often elaborately carved and originally painted in vivid colours, market crosses acted as way points or stages on a pilgrimage route (Aston 1985).

### *Market Places*

It is market places that define the concept of market towns, in comparison to other settlement types. Rural trade and commerce originally developed within church grounds, gradually expanding

beyond these confines. In many locations, market squares provided an extension of this trade. Acting as a focal point and gathering point for townsfolk, they provided a space not only for commerce but socialising and attractions such as fairs. As market towns developed, the jostling for position along routes in and out of towns and in the squares themselves, brought about development and expansion, which led to more formalised building.

## 6.6 Architecture of Market Towns

In England, buildings in market towns developed from early timber construction techniques. They were primarily based on different approaches to the hall typology, which despite its name was generally occupied by freeholders and the peasantry. Many that have survived in the South and West of England show the use of Cruck frame building, using naturally curved sections of timber, which were then supported laterally by timber beams. These typologies all used a variation of wattle and daub as infill to walls, with roofs thatched in local materials. The houses were primarily single storey with one centrally located division separating the sleeping area from the living area. Preservation of many buildings in this



Figure 6.4: The market square of Alnwick Northumberland c1890. Many of the buildings pictured in this image are still standing. It demonstrates the use of stone from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century onwards in the town (chroniclelive.com).

typology suggest its use would have been widespread, even in areas lacking current examples. These houses were adapted over time, with extensions and the addition of first floors.

There was a shift to what might be perceived as more permanent structures from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. In some instances, older timber framed buildings had their wattle and daub walls replaced with brick infill. The adoption of some classical

influences, particularly in the South and aspects of Gothic architecture in the Midlands, conferred both permanency and status. More widespread use of stone occurs in other parts of England, mirroring city development. By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, stone and brick had become the primary construction materials. Earlier buildings were retained in some market towns, although most likely connected to lack of finance for rebuilding.



Development in market towns from the 17th Century onwards was a combination of infill building and new building. The establishment of new streets was often in relation to existing routes. They were arranged parallel to existing routes and in many cases followed the established settlement pattern. Infill properties retained the scale and proportions of the existing houses, with new rows often mirroring established patterns. Rows of houses were generally set close to existing routes and remained centralised. So new building tended to echo the overall form and scale of existing development. The majority of houses in were two storeys in height and closely followed the footprint and size of the medieval houses and cottages, which often they had replaced. Historical status was also reflected in the new developments. This was not necessarily a conscious shift to the adoption of *classical style*, but more an accumulative process that took place with a shift in materiality, influenced by communication and developments in London. The scale and proportion of openings and in some cases the inclusion of small amounts of classical ornament, were the most obvious visual characteristics. A move towards the production of larger developments of

multiple properties also characterised the changes taking place (Johnson 2005). Houses became larger with the adoption of classical elements, and the introduction of three storey properties in many centres, could be seen as part of infill development along major routes and in market squares. Larger detached properties, exceeding three storeys in height began to appear on routes into towns.

## 6.7 Market Economics

The primary function of smaller market towns was the sale of grain, malt, livestock and wool. These were traditional products and were traded in their raw state. There was great competition among market towns to attract traders, with goods often passing from town to town on their way to larger urbanised centres. The financial benefit of having economically stable market towns for taxation purposes was also recognised, although charters were only issued to towns which were a minimum of a day's walk between one another, to ensure independence.

Trade links with larger towns were made by itinerant corn mongers who distributed rural produce to larger settlements. Market towns developed economically

by processing raw materials from the area. Producing garments from wool and tanning animal hides meant that value was added to the raw materials. This became an important aspect, which enabled the survival of smaller communities and developed the market towns (Chalkin 2001). In essence, the economy of England was largely reliant on the countryside, which enabled the growth of market towns (Reynolds 1977).

Specialised industries also grew up in market towns. The quarrying of stone, coppicing, charcoal burning, and smithing, all became saleable products and services. It is through the interrelated industries and the expansion of trade that many market towns developed (Curtis 2005). England had far higher rates of rural population and was slow to follow continental settlement patterns of urbanisation. This helped to shape the market towns (Darby 1976). The growth in industry, and material and labour requirements, ultimately dictated the survival or growth of market towns (Sweet 1999). The wealth generated by raw materials such as coal and processed materials such as textiles, was unprecedented. The physical manifestations of this new wealth can be found in market towns throughout

England and it was reflected in the status of new housing developments (Burton & Cruickshank 1990).

The of the railway network played an important role in the economic expansion of market towns. Whilst some more isolated towns were slipping into decline, the rail offered a lifeline to many. The reintegration of these towns into a wider trade network gave them the ability to compete for trade. Railways not only offered a convenient and efficient means of transporting goods, but afforded greater connectivity with urban centres. The ability to transport manufactured goods, over long distances helped shape the growth of many market towns (Sweet 1999).

## 6.8 Suburbanisation of Market Towns

The rapid expansion of cities had a profound effect on market towns. Their importance in sustaining urban growth, was key to their prosperity. The greatest beneficiaries were the market towns in close proximity to urban centres; which made further profits redistributing produce of more isolated settlements. Communication was of increasing

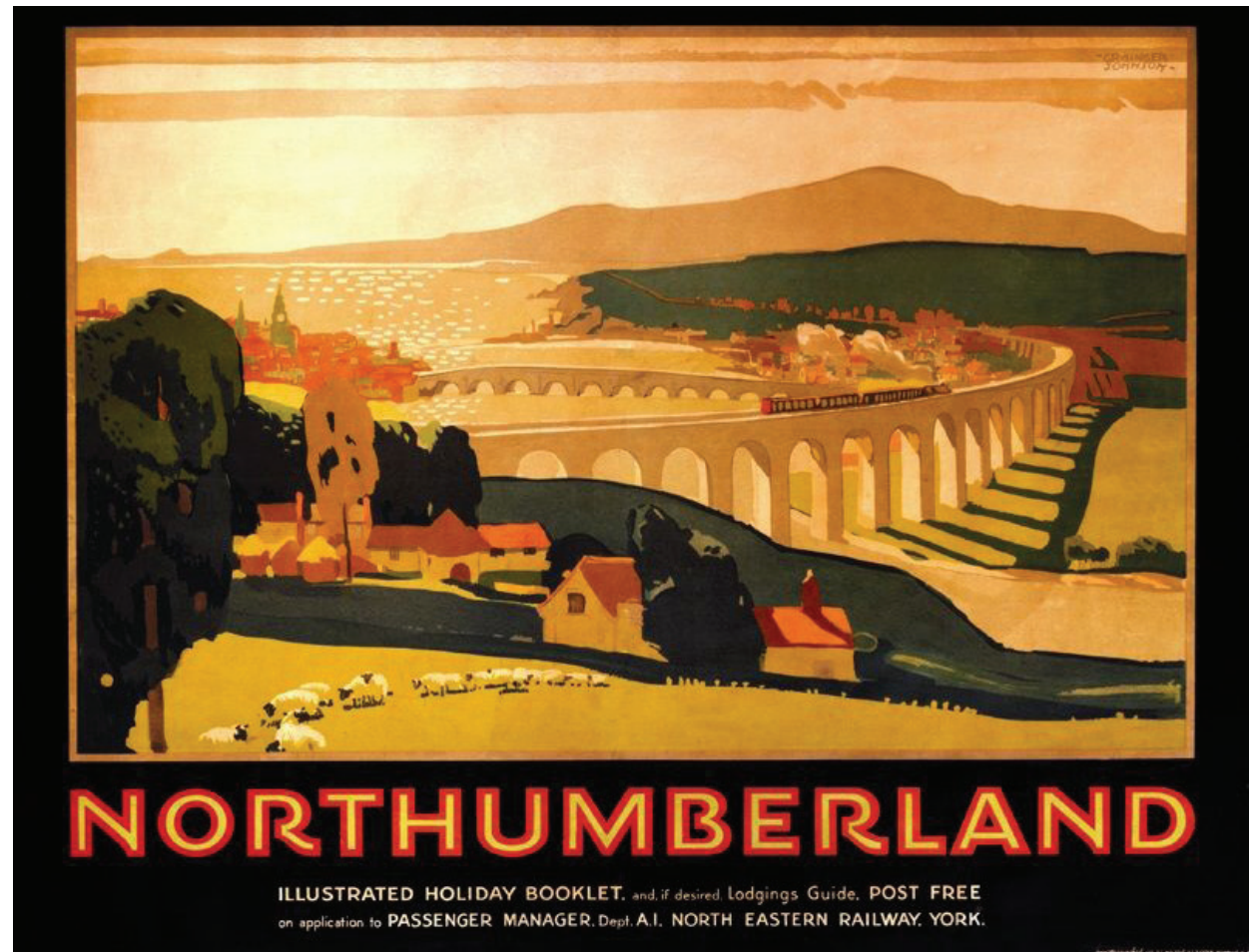


Figure 6.5: Early 20th Century LNER Railways poster for Northumberland, featuring the viaduct at Berwick Upon Tweed. Rail travel bought many visitors to market towns prior to widespread car ownership (Tyne & Wear Museums 2015).

importance, and road infrastructure played a vital role in the success or failure of towns. The other effect of urban expansion, was large scale migration to urban centres (Ellis 2001). Rail continued to be key to the physical expansion of market towns (Figure 6.5). It had linked the suburbs

to the city, and it linked market towns to wider urban markets (Girourd 1990). Rail enabled migration in the opposite direction as there and there was an increase in those living in market towns. The connectivity afforded by the rail network, allowed some sectors of society to relocate away



from cities and suburbs. These movements generated a kind of greater suburbanisation at distance from urban centres and became termed counter urbanisation (Pryor 2011). The expansion of residential development in market towns satisfied a desire for rural existence, and greater connectivity contributed to a slow but significant move away from urban centres, particularly among the middle classes. Housing style followed a similar model to that of urban speculative development and construction of terraced houses in market towns, followed the pattern adopted in many urban suburbs. The imposition of new development, followed already established settlement patterns (Sweet 1999). They were integrated into existing routes through towns, or continued development parallel to those routes. Houses opened directly onto the street or front doors were given a little privacy by including a small garden. This maintained a direct relationship with the street, in the traditional pattern.

It was in the design of new terraced houses that regularity and uniformity emerged, in contrast to smaller and often ad hoc developments that preceded it (Rowley 2006). The most profound changes to market towns occurred in the



Figure 6.6: An illustration of the inter-war estate and semi-detached house. Its depiction hints at a suburban, come rural existence. (financialtimes.com 2016).

20th Century. Approaches taken in new development, show a distinct move away from established settlement patterns. The introduction of estates which made use of the cul-de-sac and crescent in the inter-war period was significant in changing the

character of market towns. Both social and private housing estates, had a significant impact on the relationship with the historic context of market towns. The design of estates separated them from established routes through market towns (Kutch 2010). While they relied on the existing infrastructure for access, there was often just one connection to the existing road network. This kind of development limited interaction with the wider town environment. The plots provided greater privacy with segregation from the public realm, as large front gardens produced significant detachment from the street (Figure 6.6).

The scale of development also bought about increases in the population of market towns, and the segregation of the new houses meant that new residents had limited interaction with the established community. The form of many of the new housing developments, followed a cottage aesthetic which had its roots in the 19th Century. Whilst this cottage aesthetic evoked a rural environment, it was the monotony of design that diminished the established settlement. Similar typologies were used nationally with no real engagement with the regional architecture or locality (Lewis 2014).

Another significant aspect in the design of new estates was the adoption of the Radburn model, which has been used extensively since the late 1960s. This back to front design approach, further added to the segregation from existing streets, routing vehicles to the rear of houses and establishing communal green spaces at the front, which are detached from the surrounding built environment. The arrangement of detached and semi-detached properties started to dominate, along with a generic design approach. Ultimately, new development in market towns reflects wider building trends; with little consideration for established settlement patterns.

## **6.9 Market Towns in the Present**

### **Social and Economic Issues**

Market towns face many issues that have been present historically. They still fulfil traditional roles as a focal point for rural populations, in providing services and market centres for agricultural trade. Nevertheless, market towns are still presented with many socio-economic problems. The mechanisation of agriculture has significantly reduced traditional rural trades, and in turn, this

has meant a steady decline in established rural communities. The outward migration by young people has continued, as they seek wider job opportunities and greater choice in housing in urban areas (Green 1999). Yet, in the 21st Century, inward migration has also increased for a variety of factors. People moving from urban centres to rural areas are looking for locations that reflect a wish to balance the physical and social qualities of a more rural life-style, but maintain access to work and amenities in larger urban centres. There is also a growing demographic of people retiring to these locations, wishing to find a rural location with accessible amenities. The effect has been to increase the cost of houses in market towns, putting further pressure on affordable housing in these locations (Powe et al 2007).

The economies of market towns have also changed, with greater emphasis being placed upon commercial and retail activities. Market towns with higher proportions of workers commuting to urban areas, tend to benefit from the income associated with urban areas and spend locally in the market towns. The attractiveness of market towns is also significant in relation to their popularity for day trippers and the increase in tourism. Proximity to wider tourist areas

such as national parks and monuments supports this trend in tourism. This has created local economies focussed on providing services and retail opportunities (Philips & Swaffin-Smith 2004). Market towns still function as key service points for wider rural communities this aspect is key to their economies, particularly in locations that are not in proximity to larger urban areas, or areas associated with tourism (Powe & Shaw 2004).

It has become an imperative of many market towns to protect their historic environment, and this has been supported by the establishment of conservation areas. This provision is often associated with design guidance, covering preferred development strategies. It also provides guidance for residents on aesthetic considerations in relation to maintaining the character of the town. The aim is to shape existing and future development (Powe et al 2007). The physical appearance of these towns is significant to their economic success, in terms of attracting new private residents as well as visitors. Historic Towns Forum (2009) identified the historical heritage of market towns as a key aspect of their economic success. With urban centres offering greater variety in terms of retail and leisure, the heritage of

market towns and their rural surroundings is key to their success (Powe et al 2014).

Continued Development in Market Towns and the pressure of increased population continues through counter-urbanisation. Hoggart, Buller and Black (2014) highlight the dichotomy between housing development and a desire to preserve rural identity; with long established policies to protect the rural environment being implemented alongside large scale detached and semi-detached development. Hoggart & Henderson (2005) question the ability of government and local authorities to encourage suitable levels of housing, to address the changing social composition of communities; with a lack of housing provision for poorer demographics. Instead, they argue that since the 1970s, development has favoured the gentrification of many rural communities. This is also supported by the demographics which are most profitable for developers, leading to estates that follow patterns established in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Opposition to such developments has been far stronger, where a lack of affordable housing is evident. The general attitude of the local populace in market towns, is to oppose new development; particularly when it is felt that the proposals are going

to effect the character of the place (Gallent 2014).

## **6.10 Conclusion**

Market towns are significant in terms of their place in the rural landscape of England. They demonstrate a continuity of development, which was often lost through industrialisation and expansion in larger towns and cities. The relationship market towns have with the surrounding rural environment, is associated with the locality. Approaches taken in the design of traditional architecture in market towns are reflective of the environments in which they have developed, including the materials involved (Brunskill 2001). The towns are also reflective of strong social and cultural ties, specific to their region. Many inhabitants of market towns closely identify with their characteristics and traditions, along with the wider context of the rural environment. It is the centre of many market towns that can be seen as the heart of the community, reflecting its character and heritage. Civic pride and a desire to maintain the character and identity of many market towns, has been central to the opposition that new development has received (Philips & Swaffin-Smith 2004). The varying

approaches taken by developers in market towns, prompts the question of how best to respond to the historic context. By examining developments in the data collection, it is aimed to establish a greater understanding of the design strategies used. In order to establish a systematic approach to evaluating these developments, the next chapter will generate an architectural analysis that can be applied to the data.

## *7.0 Architectural Analysis*



## 7.0 Architectural Analysis

### 7.1 Introduction

In order to examine the architecture of market towns, an understanding of the key aspects of housing design and construction must be established. This information is derived from literature concerned with the analysis of architecture. The establishment of definitions and explanations of key concepts, will inform the overall investigation and provide a basis for architectural analysis of the data. This analysis will provide a greater understanding of historic and contemporary approaches to design, providing a summary and brief contextualisation for each aspect of the evaluation (theoretical texts matrix, at end of chapter Figure 7.11).

### 7.2 Type

The type of house is significant in the analysis of domestic architecture. The grouping of houses is significant in terms of type. Detached, semi-detached and terraced housing, is often influenced by the density of a housing development (Gray 1996). Status is another contributory factor; often expressed through the amount

of space afforded to each property. Grouping houses is an important aspect, not least in speculative house building. Terraced housing is the least expensive form of housing. Initially it was associated



Figure: 7.1 Early speculative development in Islington, which demonstrates the use of classical proportions and stucco finish, to enhance curb appeal (architecturelondon2015).

with high status properties, later becoming a solution for mass housing. Increasing aspirations and a suburban context, led to the use of semi-detached and detached housing. With greater space afforded to housing plots and only having one neighbouring property alluded to a higher status country properties (Aslet 2008). The façade has been an important aspect of speculative housebuilding since its early stages (Figure 7.1). The façade is the view mostly seen by the public, often corresponding with the entrance to a building. The facade has been described

as the face of a building communicating function and status (Gray 1996). Since the development of speculative building in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century the facade has received the greatest amount of attention in terms of aesthetics. At present, particularly in speculative building, it is the facade which commands most attention. From this the colloquial term kerb appeal has arisen, reflecting the idea that the property is sold on first impressions. The term elevation is used to describe the vertical external planes of a building (Aslet 2008, et al).

Habitation can be seen as the way in which a building is used. It can be reflective of patterns of domesticity throughout buildings' life span. Patina and wear are physical manifestations of use, allowing a response to its previous occupants (Jeremiah 2000). As requirements change over time, it can be seen as that adaptations are made to the building physical fabric. Extensions to roof spaces, along with the changes of use for different spaces can be seen as the evolution in domestic requirements (de Botton 2006). The design of a house can be seen as a direct response to the environment in which it is placed. Traditionally, this has been in association with the availability of materials (Unwin 2009). These responses have shaped many

towns, responding to the requirements of a given time and situation, with the expression of design evolution informing the character of such places. Features such as pitched roof are indicative of an environment in which precipitation is high. Whilst the wider relationship between humanity, dwelling and the environment has evolved with the development of technologies. The impact can be seen in consideration of the wider environment. The house can be a significant factor in the expression of a local environment, and it has the potential to benefit the wider environment. The environmental footprint of many buildings has grown with international trade and the development of synthetic building materials. Whilst there are inefficiencies of older properties in terms of their environmental control, they can also contribute to the ambience of the locality (Unwin 2009).

### ***Possible Findings***

It would be expected that elements of this analysis, will be found in the visual surveys conducted. This would include the representation of all types of grouping, the predominance of which will be established. Groupings may also correlate with different periods of development as

identified in 3.0 Speculative Building. Evidence of habitation, in terms of structural amendment and changes of use one would expect to occur in relation to more historic development, 2.0 Vernacular architecture.

### **7.3 Form**

In relation to domestic architecture, form is the overall three-dimensional shape of the building (de Botton 2006). It has arisen from the experience of responding to, physical, environmental and social factors in a local environment (Oliver 2003). It was a combination of environment and material availability which produced the building strategies, and which in turn produced building forms. Form provides an immediate and legible reading of the environment in which buildings are situated (Brunskill 2000). There have been advances in technology which have sought to overcome the traditional issues of local material availability and the environment. Certain forms have cultural resonance and significance, which has been eroded with the adoption of standardised building components (Alexander 1979). In Britain, it is the pitched roof that most represents a historic response to climate. Whilst the degree of pitch has changed through

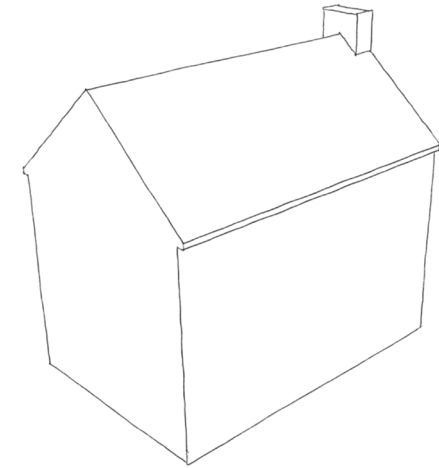


Figure: 7.2 A diagram of the primary form of a Georgian house, demonstrating the increase in wall height in relation to the roof. The effect of which was achieved through changes in materiality.

different periods, its shape is reflective of purpose.

The built form, particularly in the case of the dwelling represents a familiarity and shared past (Pallasmaa 2007). Since the early medieval period the relationship of the wall and roof have changed dramatically, with the wall increasing in height as technology improved in turn reducing roof height (Figure 7.2). The relationship between wall and roof has changed, in part due to the edition of further floors. What emerged with the industrialisation of the building process, is a standardised reproduction of these

forms that eroded many traditional aspects of the built form, replacing them with generalised interpretations of past styles (Kemsly & Platt 2012). Geometric shape can be seen as a primary way in which buildings are identified and classified. It is the manipulation and organisation of primary shapes such as, circles, squares, triangles, rectangles and their translation into solid shapes and volumetric solids, that delineates overall form (Hertzberger 1998). Shape also has wider cultural significance; within the West the triangle is most closely associated with



Figure: 7.3 Building scales are relative to human scale, particularly in relation to domestic architecture.

religious practice. A three-dimensional manifestation is the steeple, with its symbolic connection between earth and heaven. By analysing shape within domestic architecture, it is possible to establish the architectural language and its significance, as well as the function and significance of the shapes within it, (Unwin 2009).

### *Possible Findings*

From the research carried out in 2.0 Vernacular and 3.0 Speculative Building, it could be concluded that the predominant form found in visual analysis, will be a



Figure: 7.4 Seaton Deleval Hall, the scale of which is further exaggerated with the placement of a statue, which is representative of human scale (telegraph.co.uk 2015).

variation of pitched roof types. These may include, pitched, monopitch and hipped roofs. From the research conducted it is also possible that the relationship of wall height to roof height is a significant feature of housing from different periods.

### **7.4 Scale**

Scale influences the perception of a building. While size is not the same as scale, the arrangement of large and small elements effects the way in which the apparent size is perceived. Scale within architecture is linked with comparison, in order for elements to seem large, others seem to be subordinated (Moore & Allen 1977). Using exaggerations of familiar elements is one way which architecture has made use of scale in a symbolic way. Doorways are familiar architectural element and in houses, generally relate to human scale (Figure 7.3). However, in the classical style including notable houses, they can be built larger than necessary (Figure 7.4) (Gray 1996).

It is the enlargement of the main entrance that gives it a new significance, in comparison to other doorways. Its stature acts as a sign; the status of the door is elevated (Unwin 2009). In traditional

houses, scale emerged through custom and practice, as many traditional constructions were artisans. It was therefore determined by the people creating the buildings (Pallasmaa 2007). Thus, scale in domestic architecture can differ, depending on location, culture and who is actually producing the houses (Davies 2011).

### ***Possible Findings***

As Davies (2011) states scale can differ dependant on location and culture, the relationship of building in the centre of market towns has developed in relation to existing buildings into which new development has been place. Scale has also been used to communicate the status of buildings, often superseding the established scale of a location to emphasise an individual or group of buildings. In conducting my visual analysis, I will seek to establish if there is a correlation between status and scale along with its correlation with .

## **7.5 Proportion**

Proportion in architecture is fundamentally about the relationship between the width and height, from overall buildings to individual elements. It is then how these

elements in turn relate to the overall building that produces a sense of order. There are premeditated systems that result in coherent relationships between buildings and elements (Moore & Allen 1977).

### ***Proportional Systems***

The mathematical principles which determine proportion of many buildings, were refined in the Renaissance. This was achieved through devices such as the



Figure: 7.5 Illustration of a Georgian facade, demonstrating the subdivisions of the golden section used in its composition.



golden section (Figure 7.5). Other methods included harmonic proportion developed from music, often using the intervals of chords within a scale ie 1,3,5,8 etc (Ching 2007).

### *Manufactured Proportions*

Standardisation has created products that correspond to a form of regularity in order that their production is more efficient and cost effective. This standardisation within the construction process has resulted in many components - bricks, timber and wallboard, determining the proportions of buildings. Increasingly, with the use of software, the proportions of these elements are being exploited for efficiency from the design stage (Pallasmaa 2007, Unwin 2009).

### *Structural Proportions*

Structural proportions refer to the limitations of a given material and the effect it has upon the overall proportions of a building. Historically this was of significance within domestic architecture, defining the shape of traditional buildings (Figure 7.6). The limitations of stone and timber, which were historically the primary building materials particularly effected

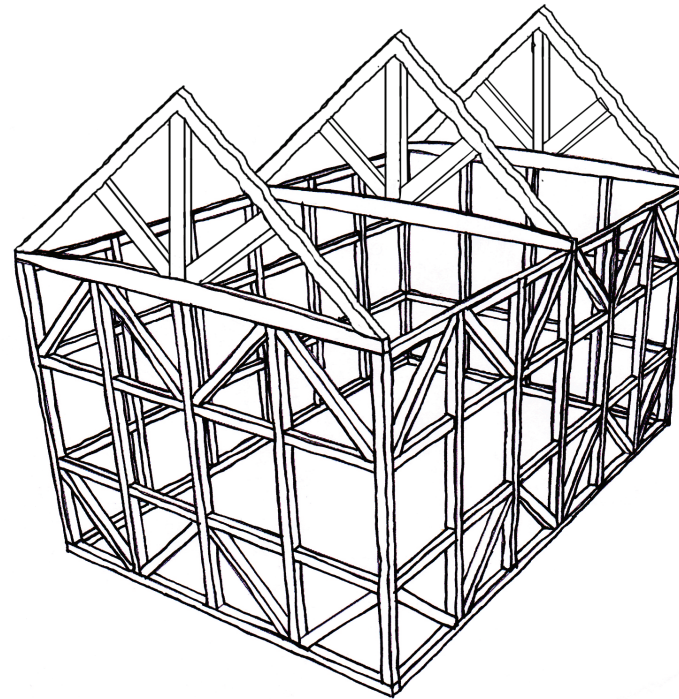


Figure 7.6 Diagram of a box frame construction, which demonstrates the material limitations of timber frames. The subdivision of the structure into smaller spans, making best use of timber; in terms of its material properties.



Figure 7.7: The rhythm of this row of houses is expressed in the bays, with articulation achieved through the repetition and pattern of each bay. Some in this instance are handed, adding variety.

the distance that a lateral element could span, and therefore it is at least implied that all openings would be vertical, as shown in the pattern books, derived from Renaissance proportions (Brunskill 2000, Unwin 2009).

### *Possible Findings*

It is clear from the analysis, that different approaches to proportion correlate with differing approaches to design and construction. In turn they are associated with different periods of construction, the impact of which will be examined in relation to the architecture of different periods.

## **7.6 Rhythm**

Repetition of elements is referred to as rhythm (Figure 7.7). The arrangement and repetition of structural elements and apertures help to establish a rhythm, which can signify movement within a built form, drawing the eye to follow the recurring pattern (Unwin 2009). It is the repetition that contributes to a sense of rhythm. Rhythm is closely associated with classical architecture, and can be structural, ornamental or a combination. Rhythm is also integral to music, offering



Figure: 7.8 Semi-detached property which is representative of a move towards standardised elements which have become part of the cannon of housing development. Standardised horizontal window casements, manufactured roofing materials and standardised timber framing, all contribute to a sameness.

parallels between different forms of art. Major and minor rhythms in music can provide interesting visual effects in domestic architecture (Ching 2007).

### *Possible Findings*

Rhythm is closely associated with architectural styles associated with classicism, this may be expressed through the arrangement of window-panel-window or the pattern of brickwork and the placement of pilasters.

## **7.7 Material and Construction and Detail**

The use of material was traditionally restricted by availability, with the proximity of a material being the primary catalyst for its adoption into a local vernacular. In Britain, there has traditionally been reflection of locality in buildings through material use and specification (Brunskill 2000). This changed due to advances in transportation



during the 19th Century, allowing materials to be more widely distributed. In turn this facilitated the boom in speculative building, which bought about greater standardisation of building materials and a more limited selection (Figure 7.8). Material has traditionally dictated the scale and proportion of buildings and limited availability of a variety of materials, has contributed to many distinctive traditional styles of building (Davies 2011).

Standardisation and technological advances have enlarged the scale and diluted the proportions of traditional buildings. Many new approaches to



Figure: 7.10 Panini's Interior of St Peter's, illustrates the elevation of material through human intervention, into something that speaks of human thought and expression (metmuseum.org 2016).

building have also reduced the reveal associated with openings (Figure 7.9), in turn diminishing the visual articulation that earlier buildings possess (Pallasmaa 2007). Technological advances have not only bought about structural change, but also a change in surface and texture (Zumthor 2006). Traditional materiality is less uniform in appearance; due to its natural composition as well as the way in which it has been worked. A uniformity of surface has emerged through the industrialisation of the building process, removing the random acts of hand and nature. Much of the material technology today is built to defy weathering, diminishing the signs of wear and age (Rasmussen 1957).

The structure can be seen as the arrangement of material which supports the building as a whole (Unwin 2009). As building technology has advanced, the legibility of structure has decreased. Looking at a stone building, the composition of the structure is legible, one stone arranged against another. Historically there has been an inexorable link between materiality and structure, the legibility of which has informed many architectural styles and movements. Le Corbusier (1931), distilled the role



Figure: 7.9 In many buildings, reveal is achieved with the recessing of windows and doorways from the facade. This was in part due to construction methods, but also served to differentiate openings from surface. Many modern buildings and building systems have reduced this, placing windows and doorways flush with the external surface.

of structure within architecture stating that; 'Stones are dead things sleeping in the quarries but the apses of St. Peter's are a drama', inferring that it is human intervention with these elements which elevate them to architecture (Figure 7.10). What has emerged is architecture which deceives, in some senses by approximating materials associated with different types of structure (Rasmussen 1957). This has a significant bearing on the apparent mass

of a building, which can be defined as the physical presence of a building and the weight of its structure. Mass can also be exaggerated through materiality and detail adding to the perceived weight of a building (Unwin 2009).

Material and colour are intrinsically linked; for example, the colour of local stone and its contribution to the character of much of the vernacular domestic architecture in England. The ability of colour to alter the appearance and perception of a form has long been used. With natural materials, age and weathering allow natural textures and patina to develop, whilst the processing and finishing of materials; can be used to affect different types of texture. The advent of manufacturing brought a change in surface and colour, as traditional materiality is less uniform in appearance. (Kemsly & Platt 2012). A uniformity of surface has emerged through the industrialisation of the building process, removing random acts of hand and nature (Rasmussen 1957) which have been classified as individual character (Pallasmaa 2007).

### ***Possible Findings***

Material in terms of localised building approaches in chapter 2.0 Vernacular

Architecture, demonstrates a correlation between localised sources of material and their impact on the character of a given location. Its connection with scale and form, will be examined. Changes in materiality may contribute increases in scale, changes in visual appearance and differences in form.

## **7.8 Conclusion**

The theoretical analysis in this section provides a basis for the assessment of houses in English market towns. The purpose will be to establish the approaches taken in the design of houses historically and how these may have shaped regional identity. Examining these factors in a particular place, provides the ability to establish patterns of development and architectural distinctiveness. In turn an overall picture can be established, into which newer development can be assessed. This will be based upon how it corresponds with the established analytical framework.



**Figure 7.11: Matrix of key theoretical texts and content.**

<b>Author</b>	Brunskill (2000)	Rasmussen (1997)	Unwin (2009)	Kemsly & Platt (2012)	Alexander (1979)	Pallasmaa (2007)
<b>Form</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•
Language	•	•	•	•	•	•
Roof	•		•	•	•	•
Elevation	•	•	•	•	•	•
Apertures	•	•	•	•	•	•
Plan	•	•	•	•	•	•
Orientation	•	•	•	•	•	•
Scale	•	•	•	•	•	•
Footing	•	•	•	•	•	•
Traditional	•	•	•	•	•	•
Proportion	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Material</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•
Types	•	•	•	•		
Locality	•		•	•	•	•
Construction	•	•	•	•	•	•
Surface	•	•	•	•	•	•
Orientation	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Aesthetics</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•
Colour	•	•	•	•	•	•
Rhythm	•	•	•	•	•	•
Pattern	•	•	•	•	•	•
Texture	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Lifespan</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•
Pastiche				•		•
Environment			•	•		•
Time	•	•	•	•	•	•
Patina		•	•	•	•	•
Habitation	•	•	•	•	•	•
Adaptation	•		•	•	•	
<b>Sensory</b>		•	•	•	•	•
Colour		•	•	•	•	•
Sound		•				•
Daylight		•	•	•	•	•
Smell		•				•
Touch		•	•	•	•	•

Author	de Botton (2006)	Hertzberger (2010)	Zumthor (2010)	Oliver (2003)	Davies (2011)	Ching (2007)
<b>Form</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•
Language	•			•	•	•
Roof		•	•	•	•	•
Elevation	•	•	•	•	•	•
Apertures	•	•	•	•	•	•
Plan	•	•	•	•	•	•
Orientation	•	•	•	•	•	•
Scale	•	•	•	•	•	•
Footing	•	•	•		•	•
Traditional	•		•	•	•	•
Proportion	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Material</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•
Types			•	•	•	•
Locality				•	•	•
Construction	•	•	•	•	•	•
Surface		•	•	•	•	•
Orientation		•		•	•	•
<b>Aesthetics</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•
Colour	•	•	•	•	•	•
Rhythm	•	•	•	•	•	•
Patern	•	•	•	•	•	•
Texture	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Lifespan</b>	•	•	•	•	•	
Pastiche	•					
Environment			•			
Time	•		•	•	•	
Patina	•		•			
Habitation	•	•	•	•	•	
Adaptation			•	•	•	
<b>Sensory</b>	•	•	•	•	•	
Colour	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sound			•			
Daylight	•	•	•	•	•	•
Smell			•			
Touch	•	•	•			

Author	Le Corbusier (2008)	Giedion (1963)	Hopkins (2012)	Gray (1996)	Muthesius (1906)	Aslet (2008)	Batchelard (1992)
<b>Form</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Language	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Roof	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Elevation	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Apertures	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Plan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Orientation	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Scale	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Footing	•	•			•	•	•
Traditional	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Proportion	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Material</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Types	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Locality	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Construction	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Surface	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Orientation	•	•	•	•	•	•	
<b>Aesthetics</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Colour	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Rhythm	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Patern	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Texture	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Lifespan</b>			•			•	
Pastiche		•	•	•		•	
Environment			•			•	
Time		•	•	•	•	•	•
Patina							•
Habitation	•	•	•	•		•	•
Adaptation	•	•					•
<b>Sensory</b>			•	•		•	•
Colour	•	•	•	•		•	•
Sound							•
Daylight	•	•	•			•	•
Smell							•
Touch	•	•	•				•

## *8.0 Research Methodology*



## 8.0 Research Methodology

### 8.1 Introduction

A literature review of regional domestic architecture has been undertaken, by first examining the concept of region and its various interpretations within different disciplines.

This research is located in England, and specifically in the market towns of the North East. This is because Northumberland is perceived as a remote county, and therefore strongly expressive of the region. Within the county, the market towns are centres of traditional lifestyles, and therefore places where regionalism is most likely to be found. The focus on domestic architecture is because it is individuals' most immediate and personal interaction with the built environment. Much of the urban and rural landscape of England has been shaped through dwelling (Carmona 2002). The standardisation of housing types by developers has undoubtedly contributed to a homogenising of the residential environment. One of the arguments to be explored, is whether regionalism can be experienced on a smaller scale. This may be seen in a minority of houses, as opposed

to a majority that have adopted a national architectural language. Regionalism may be derived from these elements, and therefore an architectural analysis of them may be important to the study. A traditional market town is selected as a case study, within which a development that demonstrates the characteristics of tradition, yet providing the technological and lifestyle requirements of the present; will be examined to determine if it is truly regional expression. This development is compared with a small number of others in the region. This will lead to an evaluation of this approach as a representation of regional house design.

The intention of this approach is to generate recommendations that may assist developers to build regionally responsive houses. The principal market towns in the county are – Allendale, Alnwick, Corbridge, Hexham, Morpeth Prudhoe, Warkworth and Wooler; together with Durham that is located just inside the adjacent county. A survey of these towns revealed that Corbridge, in particular, is of an appropriate size that offers an autonomous centre with a sufficient variety of housing developments over a long period of time. It therefore presents an ideal location for the main study.

## 8.2 Methodological Approaches

### 8.2.1 Strategies

#### *Quantitative Approach*

This approach can be used to assess in numerical terms, the nature and distribution of existing housing types in a given location and the variety and distribution of different architectural forms and construction materials. The use of mathematical models, theories and hypotheses can be useful if there is a fixed set of criteria to investigate (Murray-Thomas 2003). This is termed positivism. Thus statistics can be used as a means of establishing the significance of large data sets. Nevertheless, quantitative methods should not be discounted for smaller data sets, as they can reveal patterns where presented graphically. However, the evaluation of decision-making in the production and consumption of houses, involves more than just measurable attributes (Creswell 2013).

#### *Qualitative Approach*

This approach is seen as more reflective of the why questions in research. Primarily focussed upon human behaviour, it can

however be extended to the study of more physical manifestations. In this case, it encompasses the motivational reasons for building in a specific manner and the factors which influence them. It also involves the decision-making issues for purchasers, and their priorities in this decision-making. The ability to mix approaches allows the researcher to tackle different aspects, considerations and features of the same subject matter, allowing for broader examination and enquiry to take place through triangulating the evidence (Creswell 2006).

### 8.2.2 Methods

It is clear from the comparison between quantitative and qualitative research methods that mixed methods are best suited to the subject matter of this thesis.

#### *Visual Survey*

##### Data Collection

Innocent (1913) and Brunskill (1971), are pioneers in visual survey data collection, this is supported by the work of Bourdieu (1990), who formalised methodological processes by encoding meanings in the physical organisation of spaces. He

examined floor plans of houses in relation to the society, history and culture of the people who produced them. In doing so, he was able to draw out the symbolic and practical meanings for the internal relationship of spaces. In this sense notions of class, status and culture can also be read in the external arrangement of houses in England. Halle (1993) examined 19<sup>th</sup> Century architectural drawings of houses to generate an architectural analysis The work of these pioneers has informed the visual survey for this study.

The quantitative primary data collection is therefore based on a visual survey of speculative residential developments. The houses are examined using established architectural principles to generate a system for the assessment of houses. It examines:

- **Type** - Configuration of groups of houses, and whether they are detached, semi-detached or terraced
- **Form** three-dimensional shape, especially roofs and façades
- **Scale** apparent size

- **Proportion** relationship of width to height of houses and their elements
- **Rhythm** repetition of elements, in particular openings
- **Material, Construction and Detail** natural and artificial materials, uniformity and irregularity of construction elements, specification of products and their assembly

Observation is used to collect these data. Whilst it is often associated with human subjects, it can be used for observing any situation or physical presence. In essence, this is an empirical research tactic for collating a body of evidence and there is an emphasis placed real-life settings. Dunne, Pryor & Yates (2005), suggest making notes which will inform the observations made on site. The data collection uses photography, scale drawing, 3D modelling and mapping. In this way, a visual record of the housing developments are recorded. As Patton (2002) suggests, it is the ability to be selective with regard to the information recorded that is key to observation, clearly focussing upon the key aspects of a subject

that will shape the study.

### Data Analysis

The analysis is based on the elements of the data collection, ie Type, Form, Scale, Proportion, Rhythm, Material, Construction and Detail. Initially, these data are related to the houses found in Corbridge, as a traditional market town in the North East of England. Each scheme also has the potential for comparative analysis between the different houses within it. Further comparison can be achieved between the schemes. Thus, there is capacity for a multi-dimensional comparative analysis, in which the existing traditional houses create a benchmark for the newer developments. The elemental method enables detailed aspects to be directly assimilated into the proposed Framework.

### *Interviews*

In order to establish a greater understanding of contemporary development in market towns, it is important to gain an understanding of both the owner occupiers in these schemes and the professionals involved in their planning and development. For

this purpose, two studies are undertaken. The first is based on structured interviews of owner occupiers. The second is semi-structured interviews which are conducted with, architects, planners and developers.

Structured interviews are a data collection technique through which respondents are asked the same set of questions (Gray, 2009). It seeks information on residents' preferences with regard to their houses (Denscombe, 2010), and investigates the level of a household's satisfaction or dissatisfaction. A variety of responses can be used, such as a Likert scale, choosing from a list of options, and ranking options in order (Denscombe, 2010). However, due to the need for comparative analysis of the results, closed questions are proposed, in which all possible answers were included. A five-point Likert scale was applied for most of the questions; as it provides pre-coded data that can be readily analysed. This technique is used to establish homeowners' perspectives of their priorities when deciding on their specific house purchases. The interviews with the professionals ie architects, planners and developers, are not about specific houses but related to the principles of the design and development of houses in traditional market towns. Thus, they are

semi-structured interviews as they are aimed at determining why houses and their elements appear as they do.

In the development of the interview schedules, four issues are taken into consideration: the source of questions, developing specific and appropriate questions, evaluating questions, and the structure of the final schedule (De Vaus, 1996). The style should be set up in a way that enables respondents to give clear answers (Gray, 2009). Accordingly, the design of the schedule passed through several steps of development and evaluation. Questions for residents and professionals are designed to cover the same territory. Changes to houses occur over time and this is evident in the general survey of houses in Corbridge. However, as the schemes are relatively new, alterations are minimal and do not represent any significance in the study. Accordingly, eight questions are generated for the residents about the design of the houses in which they live.

The use of semi-structured interviews as one of the data collection methods is more appropriate where more complex phenomena are explored (Denscombe, 2010). It is an appropriate technique

to obtain detailed information about professionals' feelings and experiences, and more particularly, to express why they have these views. By using this method, responses can be open-ended, and the interviewees have the chance to develop ideas and talk more widely about the questions raised by the interviewer. Face-to-face and telephone interviews enable direct and pre-arranged contact between the researcher and the respondents; thus achieving a sufficient response.

### ***Homeowner Interviews***

#### **Data Collection**

The benefit of using this method for residents is twofold. It provides a structured means by which residents can express their decisions in the home-buying process, as a result it also provides a structured set of responses for analysis. In asking the respondents the same set of questions, the results are then comparable (Denscombe 2010). This method also provides a fixed set of responses, based on a five point Likert scale (Dawson 2009). The questions are also based on the findings of the visual analysis conducted in the contemporary developments. The questions are tested prior to the study

to assess their clarity and function. This will not only establish the effectiveness of the questions but also aligns them to rest of the investigation, in order that comparable conclusions can be drawn from all dimensions (Gray 2009). The design of the questions aim to establish the following;

- The importance of purchasing a new property.
- Consideration of visual appearance.
- The significance of location.
- Aspects of amenity, such as parking and accommodation.

The target is owner-occupiers in the schemes where the visual survey has taken place.

#### **Analysis**

Following the data collection, the examination of results are conducted using visual analysis. The data are examined and assessed for each scheme, assessing the responses to each question and analysing the data produced. Examining the pattern and frequency of responses is a form of descriptive statistics. To establish an overall picture of the key factors in the purchase of homes in these schemes. A

comparative analysis of the data is used to establish key findings. This informs a conclusion to this section, including consistency in the responses to the type and appearance of the houses. The interest in historic properties and traditional appearance is ascertained. The location in a market town as a primary factor in purchasing the house is examined, and whether it takes precedent over the type and appearance of the house.

### ***Interviews with Professionals***

#### **Data Collection**

Semi-structured interviews can be employed to establish an understanding of more complex subject matter (Denscombe 2010). It is an established approach for examining in more detail the perspectives of professionals in architecture, planning and development. This approach allows for more detailed answers and response to be developed. The open-ended nature of the interview process also allows for greater detail in responses. Having contacted professionals to establish their participation, it was agreed that telephone interviews are the most practical solution to data collection. This was due to the pressing schedules many may have and the



flexibility offered in terms of scheduling the interviews.

The participants are selected on the basis of them being professionally engaged with house provision in the North East of England. Architects who have designed schemes of a similar scale to those examined in this study, and who possess have particular experience in market towns are interviewed. Planning officers for the areas covered by the visual analysis are involved; and the invitation to a selection of developers is based on local companies delivering small scale high quality, regional developments. The schemes in the data collection were recommended for approval by Northumberland County Council and Durham County Council Planning Departments. In order to obtain comparative views, there are two participants from each of the architectural profession, planners and developers, giving a total of six participants.

The interview questions are formulated to thematically follow those posed to residents in the schemes. It is important to maintain a similar approach, however the wording and phrasing of the questions are amended to make them relevant to the professionals. It is also important to test

the questions amongst peers, to remove ambiguity and to ensure clarity. As with the homeowners' interviews they deal with the following issues, ie new housing developments should:

- follow similar design strategies to existing houses
- emulate historic houses
- offer contemporary design in historic locations
- integrate with established communities
- provide private space for cars

The questions and answers are recorded by dictaphone, in order to assist in the analysis. Making contemporaneous notes in association with recording also assists during the interview in terms of clarifying responses.

#### Analysis

The interviews are transcribed from the recordings, in order that a comparative analysis can be undertaken between the different respondents. Answers to each question are grouped by profession and an appraisal of each response is conducted, resulting in a distillation of the principles found in the data. By conducting the data analysis in this manner, comparisons

and differences can be identified more readily. An accompanying commentary can be developed, from which responses can be analysed (Dunne, Prior & Yates 2005). A comparative analysis can be drawn between both sets of interviews, along with the visual survey, to produce a more holistic picture of the developments and establish the physical, social and professional factors which have shaped them.

Thus a summary of the methods for this research is as follows:

#### Visual Survey

Regions, Regionalism and the Vernacular; and Development of Market Towns provide the source material. The structure of the survey is based on the Architectural Analysis.

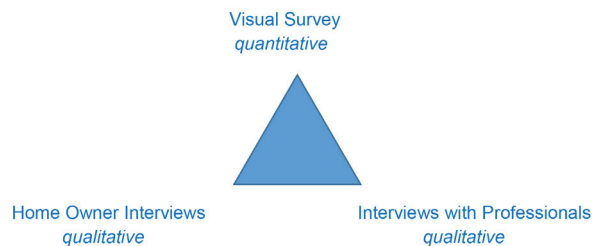
#### Homeowner Interviews

The content of these interviews is derived from the Development of Market Towns, in terms of location and provision for vehicles. Aspects about choice related to new, traditional and historic houses, internal spaces and specification originate from The Notions of Home.

## Interviews with Professionals

Speculative Development incorporates integration with existing communities; Residential Design Guidance involves decisions about traditional or contemporary architectural language; and The Development of Market Towns presents information on existing houses and how closely they should be followed in new development.

These methods can be used to triangulate the evidence:



### 8.2.3 The Schemes

The purpose of this part of the methodology is to select the schemes where the data is to be collected. The intent is to investigate a variety of sizes and locations. It might have been assumed that pressure for residential accommodation in the market towns would have produced a number of housing developments. However, during the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, this has not been the case,

with several of the market towns having no significant housing development. There may be various reasons, from increased conservation activity, protection of the green belt, cost of houses, financial crashes and so on. It is outside the scope of this thesis to ascertain the reasons but it is clear that new housing development has slowed remarkably. As Corbridge is at the centre of this thesis, its only notable 21<sup>st</sup> Century, The Chains, is a clear candidate. It is also a large scheme by North East market town standards. It is concluded that four schemes will provide a good balance and sufficient data. The project should also be different sizes. Thus three other projects of varying size are sought. The market town of Durham offered the houses at High Gate and two small projects at Alnwick and Prudhoe are also selected. The schemes are a mixture of houses and flats, some owner-occupied and others rented. This study is related to owner-occupied houses, and therefore all properties meeting these criteria are selected for the investigation, as follows:

- The Chains, Corbridge - 71 dwellings; 48 houses, 31 in private ownership, of which **25** are owner occupied
- High Gate, Durham – 60 dwellings, 34

houses, **16** in private ownership, all are owner occupied

- Potters Gate, Alnwick – 15 dwellings, 7 houses, all in private ownership and owner occupied
- Acorn square, Prudhoe – 18 dwellings, 5 houses, **4** owner occupied.

### 8.3 Ethics

The importance of ethics in any form of research cannot be underestimated. In conducting the visual survey, it is important that the local police are informed about the activity, so they could advise concerned members of the public of status and purpose of the work. The carrying of University ID is also important in establishing identity and addressing the concerns of local residents. In conducting interviews, it is important to establish the purpose of the interviews and the academic institution involved. It is also important to acknowledge that the University is being represented to the public and therefore conduct must be respectful and professional. Participants are issued with documentation, forming a paper record of their participation highlighting the purpose and the confidentiality. No names and addresses are recorded and the data

collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act of 1998. Participants' permission regarding the recording of the interviews is obtained. The identities of participants will not appear in the thesis. Obtaining consent from all the participants is key to maintaining the professionalism of the study (Mason, 2002). An introductory letter, including a range of information such as the purpose of the study; confidentiality and anonymity; and finally, thanking respondents for their participation is provided to participants. Transcription of drawings, notes and interviews is carried out immediately after collection to ensure accuracy (Willis, 2006).

#### **8.4 Proposition**

The findings and analysis from the data collection will be used to corroborate the theoretical perspective established from the literature. Together these sources will be used to construct a Framework that will encapsulate recommendations to assist in the development of regionally responsive houses. The Framework will be evaluated with an award-winning housing design project from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in another region of England, to test its generic applicability.

## *9.0 Historical Development of Corbridge*



## 9.0 The Historic Development of Corbridge

### 9.1 Pre 19<sup>th</sup> Century Corbridge

The market town of Corbridge is located 14 miles West of Newcastle Upon Tyne and has developed on the North bank of the River Tyne (Figure 9.1) . Since Roman times this stretch of the river has been used as a crossing point, initially it was one of the few fording points along this stretch of the Tyne. The Romans built the first bridge, which was located half a mile West of Corbridge's current location. It connected the garrison of Corstopitum to land south of the Tyne (Dobson & Breeze 2000).

There have been several bridges constructed at different locations along this stretch of the river, with the current bridge being completed in 1674. The present site of Corbridge is thought to have been established in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century, coinciding with the development of the church of St Andrew, which still retains some of its Saxon features. It is from this expansion of Main Street or Smithy Gate as it was known in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century and its association with the Market place that the initial core of habitation and commerce

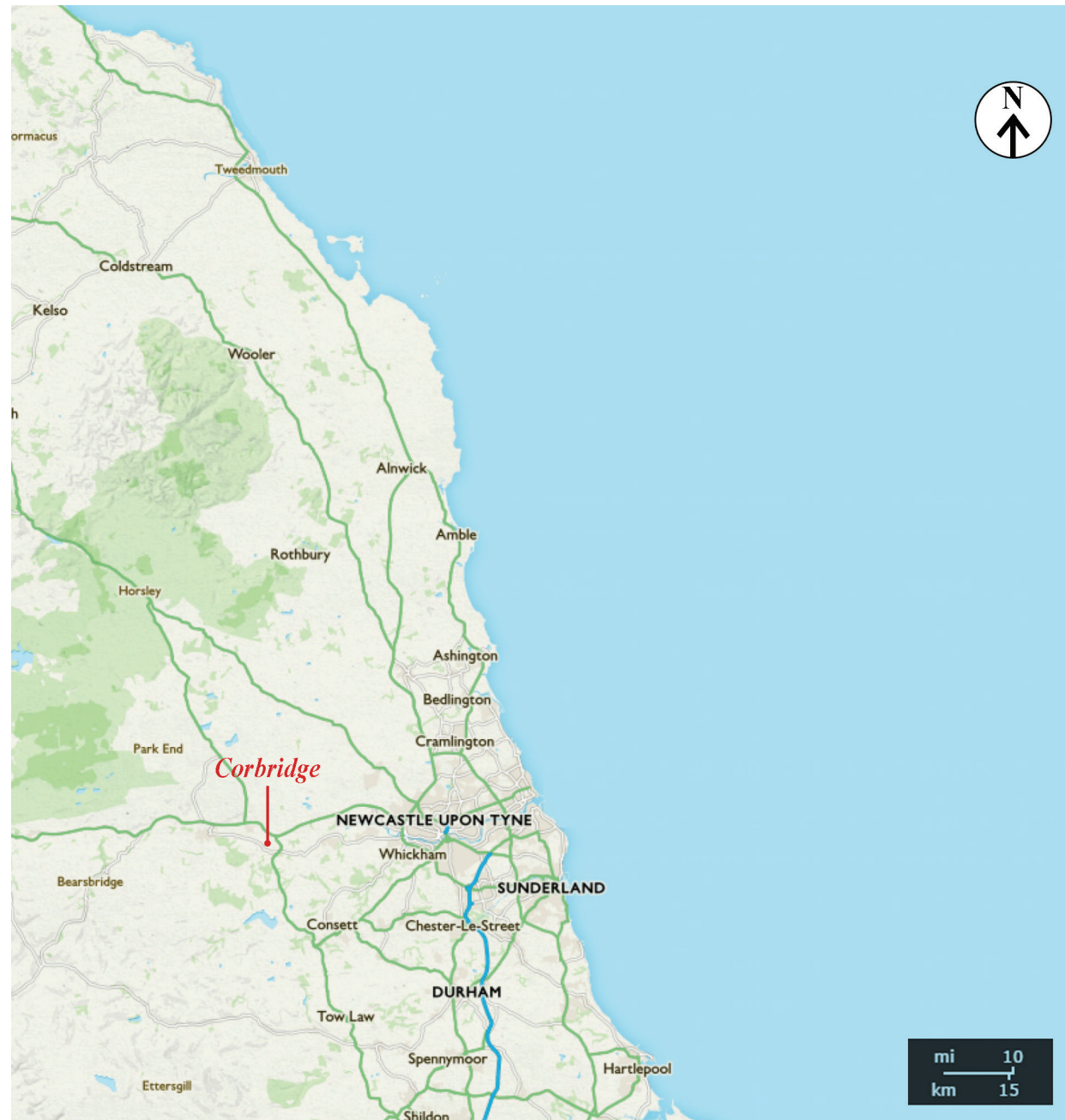


Figure: 9.1 The location of Corbridge in the Tyne Valley, Northumberland (Ordnance Survey 2015).

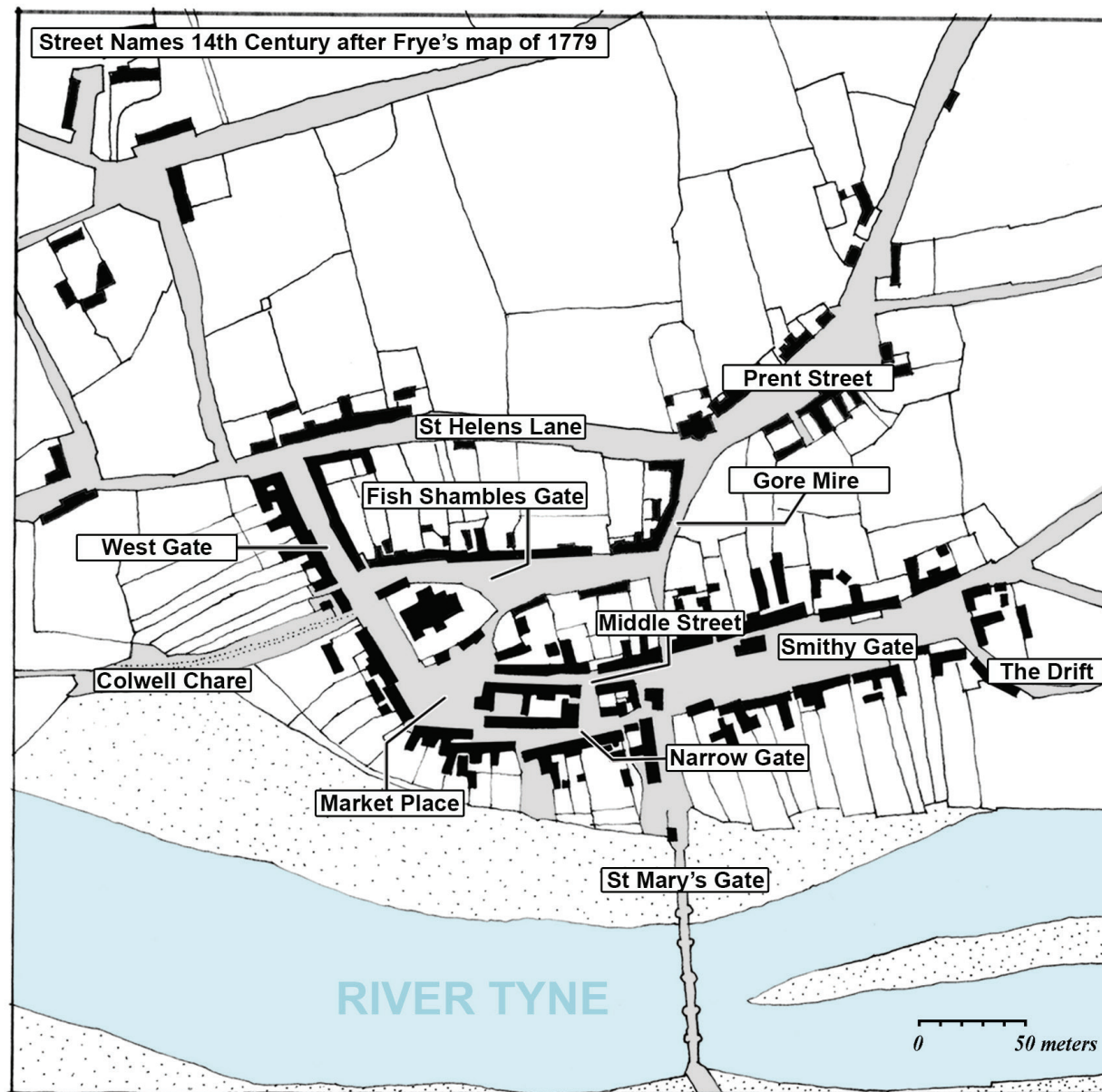


Figure: 9.2 A map of Corbridge showing the 14th Century street names, which provide an indication of function and services. Based on the Fryer map (1779).

arose in Corbridge. Main Street, as its name suggests is the primary route through the town and developed alongside the market place. The buildings which line its route evolved through a process of infill building. The Western section of Main Street is split into Middle Street (Sidgate) and Front Street (Narrowgate), with a further development occurring behind the Church now known as Hill Street (Fish Shamble Gate), (Figure 9.2). It was a regular occurrence in the Middle Ages to subdivide streets approaching market places in order to encourage travellers to use not only the stalls in the market place, but also the shops which located on the route into the market place (Dickinson 2000).

The development of stalls and shops contributed to more permanent structures, in turn developing into the current Market Place. Little survives of the earlier dwellings in these locations. Many of the current buildings are in much the same location. This provides a glimpse of the town's historic layout and development. In the 14<sup>th</sup> Century there were 12 street names in use, giving an indication of the extent of development in this period. There are also descriptions in the County History of the 14th Century, that describe





Figure 9.3: Monksholme built in 1640, is an example of Jacobean architecture in Northumberland. The significant feature of which is its smaller size in comparison to other examples of Jacobean houses in England.

Corbridge, as being a vibrant Market Town, with a great many shops and stalls in the market place, so many that they obscured the view of the Church of St Andrew (Waugh 2007). By the 18th Century Corbridge is described by Hutchinson (1766), as being dirty and disagreeable. This in part gives some explanation to why so few of its early residential buildings remain. Corbridge is located close to the Scottish Border and suffered heavily through many of the conflicts which arose between the

English and Scots. The town was raised to the ground in 1296 by William Wallace's forces, destroying everything including the church and the bridge across the Tyne. Corbridge was subsequently sacked in 1312 by Robert the Bruce and by David II in 1346. It is possible that the vulnerability of Corbridge hastened its expansion. Many of the houses were built of timber and did not survive. This gives some indication of the volatile position of Corbridge and may give some explanation to Hutchinson's account (Waugh 2007, Dickinson 2000).

The earliest existing stone dwelling in the town is Monksholme, which is located at the Eastern extent of Main Street (Figure 9.3). It would have originally carried a heather thatched roof, which was the most common roofing material in Northumberland. Monksholme is built in the Jacobean style with a twin gabled frontage and hood moulds to the external windows. Built shortly after Monksholme, there is a smaller single gable property called Monkshouse which mirrors its design. Both of these properties are constructed from irregular stone work, which is characteristic of many stone buildings of this period. Built in 1640 it precedes the Civil Wars of 1642 – 1651, which brought further instability to the region (Waugh 2007). There were other houses built at this time, with stone mullioned windows and similar gable features, however they have not survived. One of these was Causey House, which retained its thatch until the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, when it was demolished. The features of these Jacobean buildings however have been mirrored in later developments in Corbridge informing the local character. This way of building is echoed in many of the villages in the Tyne Valley (Pevsner 1992). The origins of this style was transmitted to Britain by German and



Flemish masons influenced by Italian Renaissance architecture, yet the scale of buildings in Northumbria tend to be more domestic than grand (Summerson 1993).

Corbridge developed along historic thoroughfares, with first the church then the market forming its focal point. It can be described as a nucleated settlement, with a clear and distinct centre. As with many settlements of this type, the houses have been amended over time or constructed on the sites of previous dwellings (Muir 2000). The construction of Monksholme illustrates a move towards the construction of stone dwellings in the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Much of the development in Corbridge until the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century was confined to the historic centre (Figure 9.4). New streets then developed to the North and South of Main Street. Access to Corbridge was further solidified with the building of the present bridge over the River Tyne in 1674. This enabled a greater volume of traffic to pass through Corbridge from the South and improved access to the Newcastle Turnpike (Waugh 2007, Dickinson 2000).

The construction of the bridge in 1674, enabled Corbridge to further expand. Access to the south of the river and the

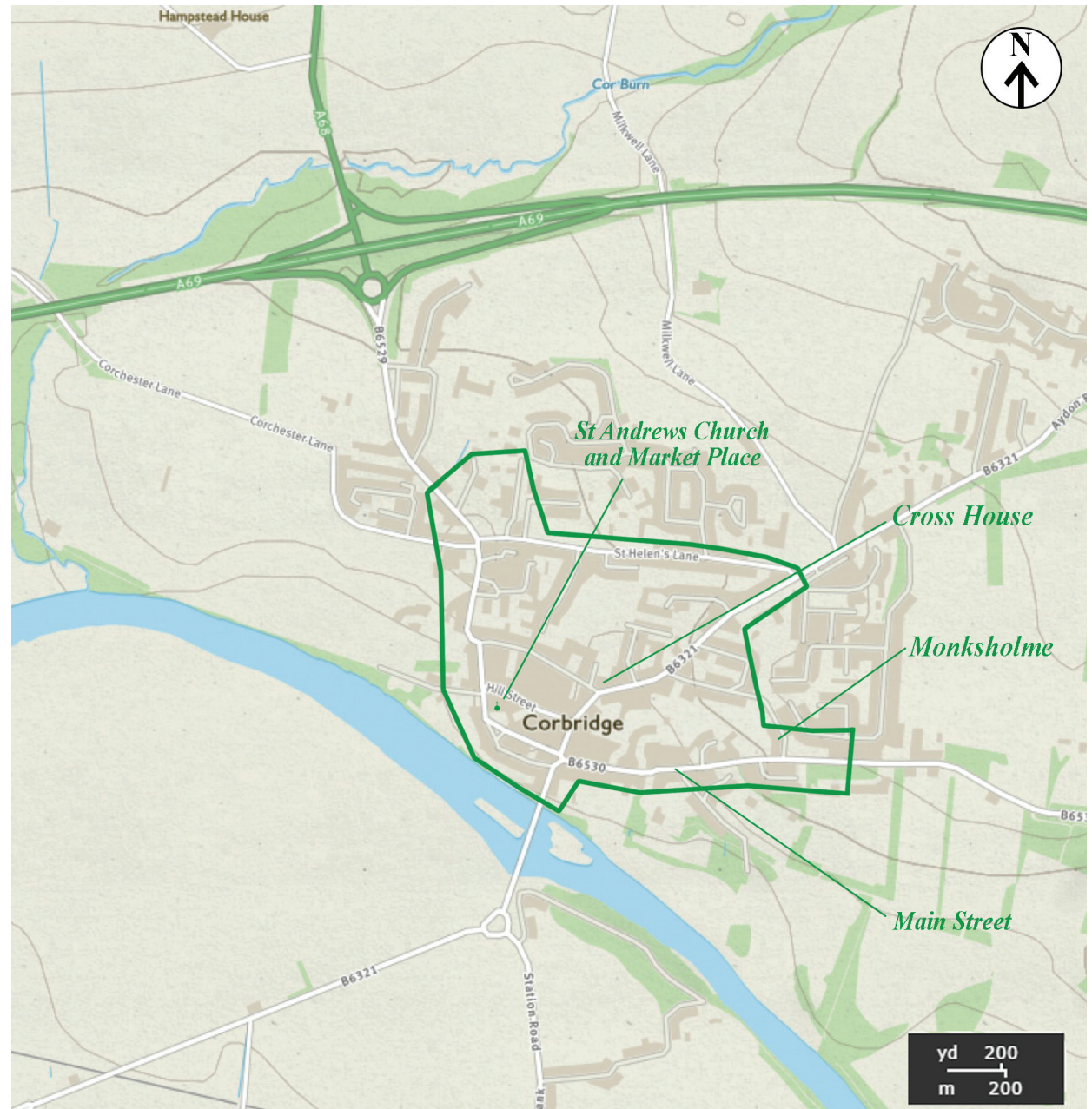


Figure: 9.4 The extent of development in Corbridge, during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The map shows the key locations in this period (Ordnance Survey 2015).





Figure 9.5: The Black Bull, originally two farm houses built side by side, amended over the years with changes in the positioning of doors and windows.

increase in passengers and trade along the Newcastle-Carlisle turnpike generated growth in the Georgian era. In this period Low Hall is added to the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Pele Tower which stands at the Eastern end of Main Street. Monksholme had been until this point the largest residential building in the town. The 18<sup>th</sup> Century brings about more substantial building developments with higher status properties of two and three stories developing around the market place and on adjacent streets. What is now the Black Bull public house

(Figure 9.5), was originally a large farm house commissioned by the Usher family and built in 1756. What is unusual about this building, is that it was not built in association with the land they owned; but in close proximity to the town centre. It clearly uses a proportional system and has two neoclassical porticoes above the doorways (Figure 9.6). Other buildings reflect an early engagement with the use of bays and proportional systems and can be viewed as a localised interpretation of national building trends. The growing

wealth of Corbridge was a localised reflection of an increase in national wealth, due to the expansion of empire and the growth of industrialisation in the period (Black 2000). Coinciding with the town's growth, the Angel Inn was constructed in 1726, to serve not only the local population but the increase in travellers using the turnpike. It was originally called the Head Inn, and served as a stopping point for the Newcastle to Carlisle mail coach (Waugh 2007, Dickinson 2000). The most striking development of this period





Figure 9.6: Detail of door with neoclassical pediment.

is Cross House, which stands at the corner of Princess Street and St Helens Street. Dating from 1756, it coincides with the demolition of Dilston Hall a 15<sup>th</sup> Century fortified manor house, the resulting spoilia was used for many projects in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. It is a double fronted Georgian property; now two separate houses. Commissioned by Eliezer Birch in 1755 and built over three stories, it is the one of largest single residential developments in Corbridge during this period. Featuring a large gable on the external facade, it



Figure 9.7: Cross house is representative of a pared down classical aesthetic found in Corbridge.

possesses many neo-classical elements, there is little elaborate decoration. In terms of proportion, it is symmetrical and its arrangement of apertures is indicative of the use of a proportional system in its design (Figure 9.7). It is also representational of a formalisation of design principles, which would be readily used by many speculative developers (Brunskill 2001). Whilst both the Jacobean style and Classical style can be seen as imported, the use of local materials and the interpretation of these styles by local

craftsmen contributes to a more localised aesthetic (Sim 1991).

The first documentary evidence for the layout of Corbridge, is the *Village of Corbridge Map* by Fryer (1779), who is credited as the surveyor (Figure 9.8 overleaf). It details much of the building within Corbridge at this time, illustrating the town's modest expansion along and adjacent to established thoroughfares. It is essentially a Tithe map showing property ownership in Corbridge. The map details

the occupation of Back Row which is now St Helens Street, cutting through the north of the town. It illustrates the connection with the Turnpike Road to Newcastle and its continuation to the west, along what is now Stagshaw Street. St Helens Street or Back Row as it was known, forms the Northern boundary to the settlement in the 18th Century, with little building occurring to the north of this road. The map details the farm of J. Walker to the West of Corbridge and the early development along the Turnpike to Newcastle. The document appears to show that Back Row and Prince Street are less developed than the rest of Corbridge. This indicates that the thoroughfare to the North of Corbridge is an expansion of the old centre. There is however a small cluster of buildings at its Western extent. This comprises of what is now the Wheatsheaf Public House, originally built at some point in the second half of the 18th Century as a farmhouse and converted in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century into a Public House (Waugh 2007).

## 9.2 19<sup>th</sup> Century Corbridge

There was a significant rise in population during this first period of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The census of 1801, shows the population of Corbridge to be 1032, by 1851 this

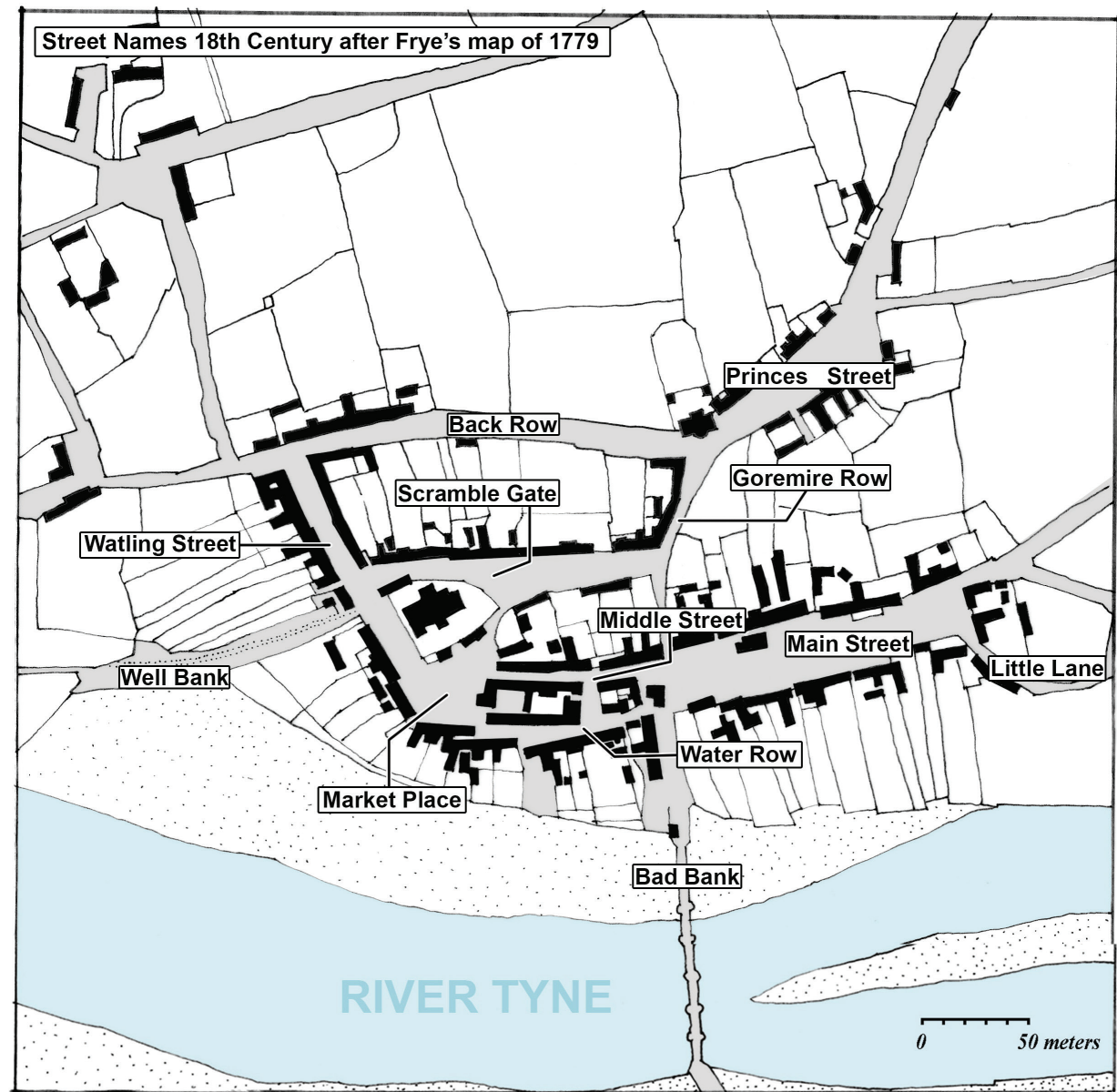


Figure 9.8: Map of Corbridge Fryer (1779) shows the name changes that occurred since the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. Only Well Bank, Princes Street, Watling Street and Main Street have survived into the present.



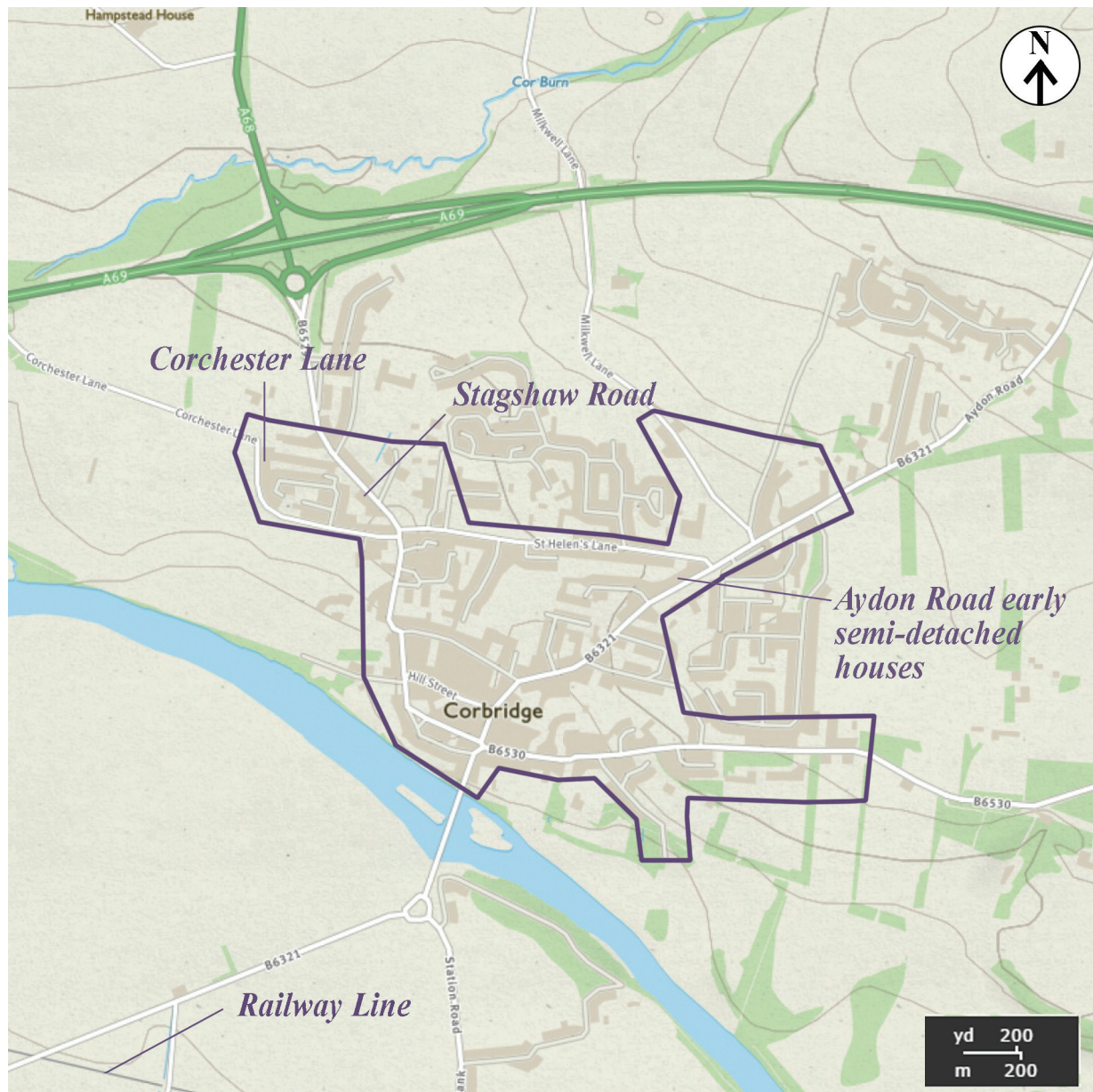


Figure 9.9: The extent of development in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century can clearly be seen to follow the established routes out of Corbridge. With infill development occurring in the centre (Ordnance Survey 2015).

has risen to 1363. Greater access by rail, helped develop greater connectivity with other towns and cities. This also provided better opportunities for trade as well as an increased capacity for freight. From the 1850s onwards there was an increase in small developments within the town centre, often as infill housing amongst older dwellings. Many of which were in keeping with the existing architecture. It is within the confines of the town centre that much of the development in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century took place (Dickinson 2000).

It was not until the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century that there is concerted development beyond the centre. This occurred to the North East and West of the town, with the River Tyne forming the Southern boundary (Figure 9.9). The location of the railway station across the river also prompted development associated with this transport link. The historic centre of Corbridge expanded along Princess Street and Stagshaw Road. There is a distinct approach to building along these routes with the introduction of terraced housing and traditional use of local sandstone; indicating a desire to retain the aesthetic of Corbridge. By the 1880s there is an inference that Corbridge had become





Figure 9.10: Proclaiming of Stagshaw Fair, (Hedley 1882). Showing a romanticised view of Corbridge in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

a desirable place to live. This can be attributed not only to improved links with other towns and cities but also a shift in attitude.

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century the squalor of many inner cities had led to the development of suburbs and also to a romanticised ideal of the countryside. This was extended to notions of the healthy open space and the clean air it provided, encouraging a greater number of people to escape the city and reside in the country.

Forster (1881) describes Corbridge in almost idyllic terms, highlighting the lack of manufacturing, its health giving springs and clean air; stating that it is a wonderful resort for those wishing to take health giving walks, reflecting the growing unease surrounding conditions within British cities (Figure 9.10). During the Victorian period, much of the development in Corbridge uses similar materials and forms to the existing properties within the town centre. The design and location of new terraces maintained a relationship

with existing routes and thoroughfares. Properties on the periphery of the centre show some change in materiality, from stone to brick. The form of these properties is very similar to many of the period, an extension of earlier pattern book design.

Conditions in the centre of Corbridge improved by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century. Hodgson (1830) had described the centre as being dirty in all streets and filthy with middens, the only exception being the Newcastle to Carlisle Turnpike. Building beyond the centre provided the opportunity to develop more exclusive properties. Many of these developments followed the existing streets, usually in the form of terraces. The style of these alludes to the Arts & Crafts Movement with expressions of timber framing on the gables (Mathesius 1984). This mirrored the suburban development of many of Britain's towns. Corbridge in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century started to expand creating suburban areas outside of the historic centre. The development during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century stops abruptly on Corchester Terrace due to the Roman remains that are located there, which is reflective of a wider engagement with antiquity. The extent of building in the Victorian period marks a significant expansion away from





Figure 9.11: Changes in materiality reflected in this early 20th Century development and a move further away from the established centre.

the centre of the town, with Corchester Terrace marking the extent of building in the West of the town; and a significant extension of the East of Corbridge, with most of the development occurring in areas associated with existing streets.

### 9.3 Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Development

From the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, there is a break from the traditional materiality of Corbridge. Developments located on Well Bank and Stagshaw Terrace were constructed in red brick in a move away from the vernacular of the area. They also showed a change in aesthetics. The houses date to 1912 and 1914 and incorporate elements such as the use of pantile roofs, pebble dashing. There is a more pared down approach to the construction in this period, which signifies more cost effective approaches to development with a greater emphasis on affordability (Figure 9.11). The aesthetic of development is not viewed as Modernist, because it clearly draws from Garden City designs and the neo-Georgian, neo-Tudor influence of the early 20th Century (Barrett & Phillips 1993). This approach was in the interests of speculative builders. A more simplified means of construction and greater standardisation provided more affordable



private housing to meet the growing demands of homeownership (Lewis 2014). The growth in the middle classes from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century resulted in higher levels of homeownership. Together with increased connectivity between market towns and larger urban centres, homeownership generated an increase in suburban development in all the market towns (Oliver et al 1981, Rowley 2006).

In line with national building trends, there was a large amount of speculative development and expansion during the inter-war period in rural areas (Figure 9.12). Issues of health in the built environment had steadily made their way into legislation from the Labourers Dwelling Act (1868) through to the first Town Planning Legislation (1909); and society had developed at an increasingly fast pace, socially and technologically. The Tudor Walters Report (1918), specified a minimum of 70ft between houses to guarantee winter sunshine, and they were to be built in either cul-de-sac's or shortened terraces, . The Report also specified that all new houses should have a large living rooms with good sun-lighting (Smith-Morris 1997). In many respects, the new housing requirements were ideally suited to the conditions in market towns.



Figure 9.12: Movement away from the established centre in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the use of larger plots of land for housing development (Ordnance Survey 2015).



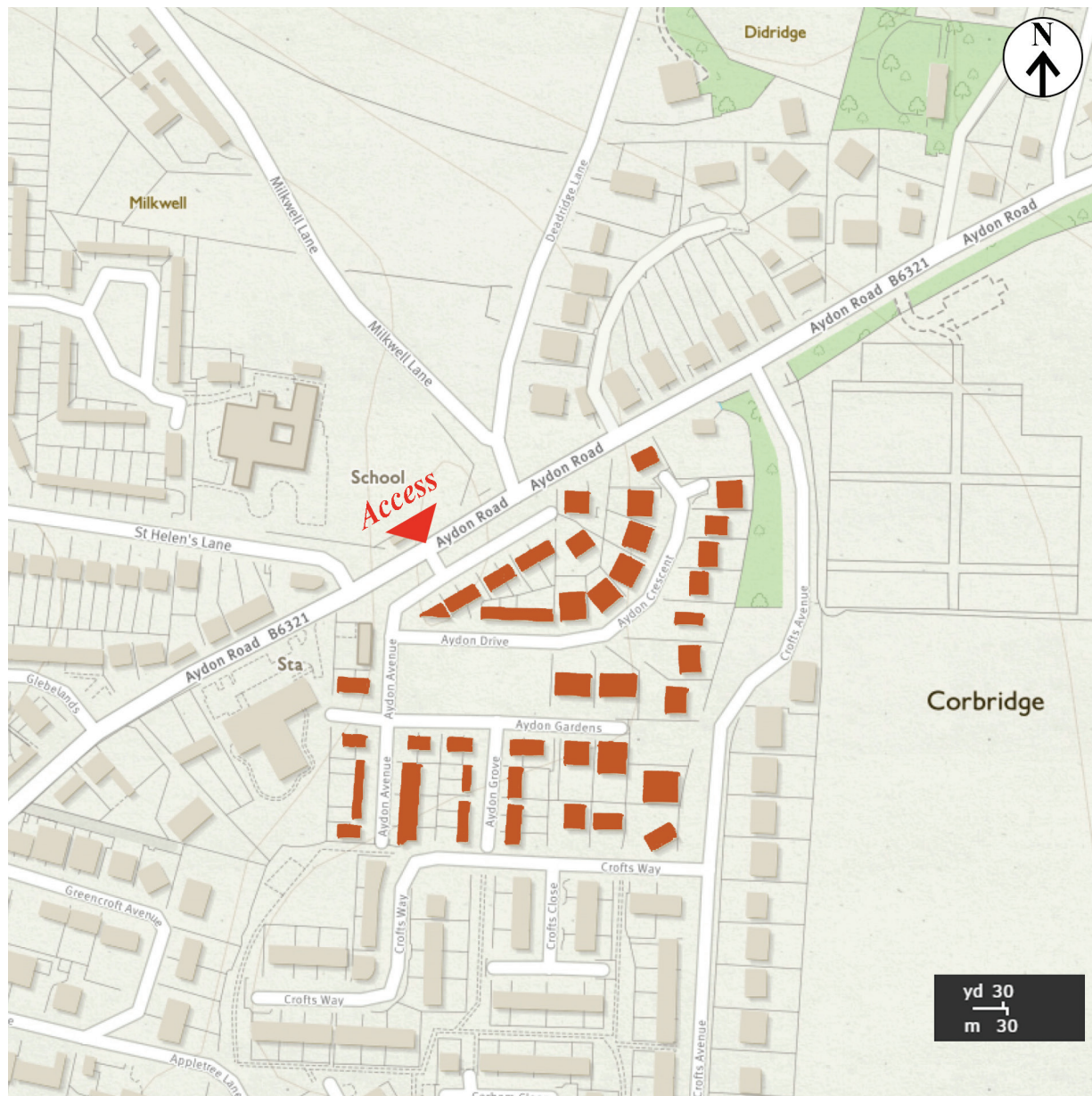


Figure 9.13: The use of the close, results in one point of access for vehicles to a scheme. As illustrated here in the Aydon Road development, cars are routed into dead end streets, which makes traffic purposeful and adds an exclusivity to its access. (Ordnance Survey 2015).

There was increased development beyond the suburbs (Jeremiah 2000). Corbridge's population passed 2000 by 1934 and there was a marked increase in healthcare and teaching professionals in the town to support this growth (Waugh 2007).

At a national scale, the inter-war period saw speculative building produce in excess of 230,000 houses, which had not been achieved since the 19th Century. The increase in car ownership contributed not only to different approaches in planning but also to new considerations in housing design. Considerations for car access and the place of pedestrians within new developments posed new challenges for developers. All three private developments of this period in Corbridge reflect this change (Figure 9.13). One of the key changes was the widening of residential streets. Just as the Omnibus and railways had aided the expansion of the suburbs in the 19th Century, the car provided even greater connectivity, allowing supported development beyond the suburbs (Morris 1996, Oliver et al 1981).

In the town, the development of Woodside Avenue is a cul-de-sac (Figure 9.14). New houses prior to this development, had primarily taken place on existing



thoroughfares. This scheme breaks from the existing pattern, forming a new street to adjoin Aydon Road. The other development of this period is also located on Aydon Road and consists of five streets and 37 houses (Figure 9.15). Again, it is cul-de-sac typology, with a central open field forming its core. As with other aspects of planning, the layout of the cul-de-sac shares similarities with Garden City design. It limits access to one point of entry and exit. This was a break away from previous development in the town, where all the streets were part of routes. The change in development pattern at this time segregates new houses from the historic core. Much of the development in Corbridge from the 1930s makes use of the cul-de-sac, in a break from the more traditional patterns of growth in the town. One aspect of the location of the development along Aydon Road, is the access it provides to what is now the A69 and routes to Newcastle Upon Tyne.

#### 9.4 Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Development

There is little development in Corbridge in the immediate post war period, although previous development had been expanding Eastwards towards Newcastle. The majority of new housing development



Figure 9.14: Woodside Avenue a 1930s close development, again restricting access to one point.



Figure 9.15: Housing typologies found in the Aydon Road development.



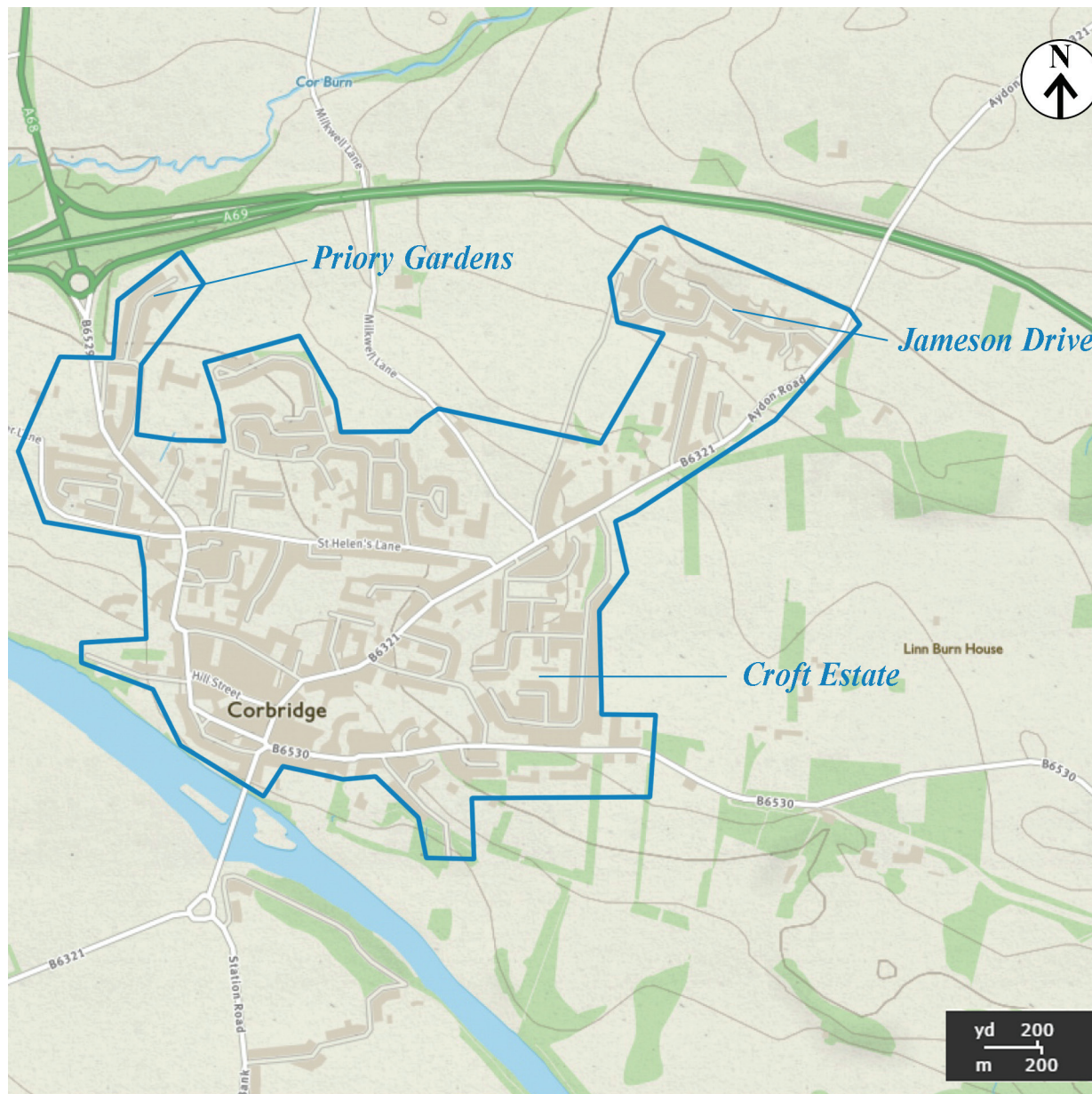


Figure 9.16: The extent of development by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century shows significant expansion away from the centre, towards the A69 dual carriage way. The separation from the centre, reducing the emphasis on designing housing which responds to it (Ordnance Survey 2015).

occurs in the late 1960s (Figure 9.16). It was actually the New Towns that were being developed in England, which influenced housing in Corbridge in the late 1960s. The search for housing solutions brought about a connection with Modernism. What evolved was a very British approach to Modernism, adopting many of its construction techniques and some of its aesthetics with a softened more traditional interpretation (Powers 2006). Retaining pitched roofs, using cladding systems and brickwork, they borrowed heavily from Scandinavian schemes of the time. The largest development in the town, was a residential mix of two storey houses and bungalows called the Croft Estate. The primary difference between this estate and previous developments in Corbridge is the planning. Whilst it refers back to the cul-de-sac approaches of the 1930s, it is the adoption of the Radburn plan which is of particular significance. What was unique about Radburn, is the intent to segregate traffic from pedestrians. The concept was derived from the USA and adopted for New Town houses. This had the effect of being able to shape the road network around new towns. In the context of Corbridge, the existing road network remained unaltered, with the boundary to this development on the West defined



by the 1930s Aydon Road houses (Figure 9.17). The core principle of Radburn is to link all amenities for pedestrians, allowing unbroken access to shops and schools, by creating a car free environment. In a traditional town such as Corbridge, it is difficult to fully achieve this level of segregation (Kostof 1991, Lee 2001).

Increasing post-war car ownership and the further construction of major roads, helped create better connections with, Hexham and Newcastle. Improved rail and bus networks helped to further secure Corbridge's status as a commuter town (Dickinson 2000). This infrastructure was a conscious decision to address the rapid increase in car ownership and its effect upon residential areas. In the Croft Estate, there is a myriad of routes in and out, most of which were established before its construction. Another goal of Radburn was to encourage interaction amongst the population through shared green spaces and pedestrian routes (Lee & Stabin-Neysmith 2001).

In plan, the estate is defined by the placement of outward-facing bungalows at its boundaries, with vehicular access at the rear of the properties. Internally, living areas such as the lounges and bedrooms

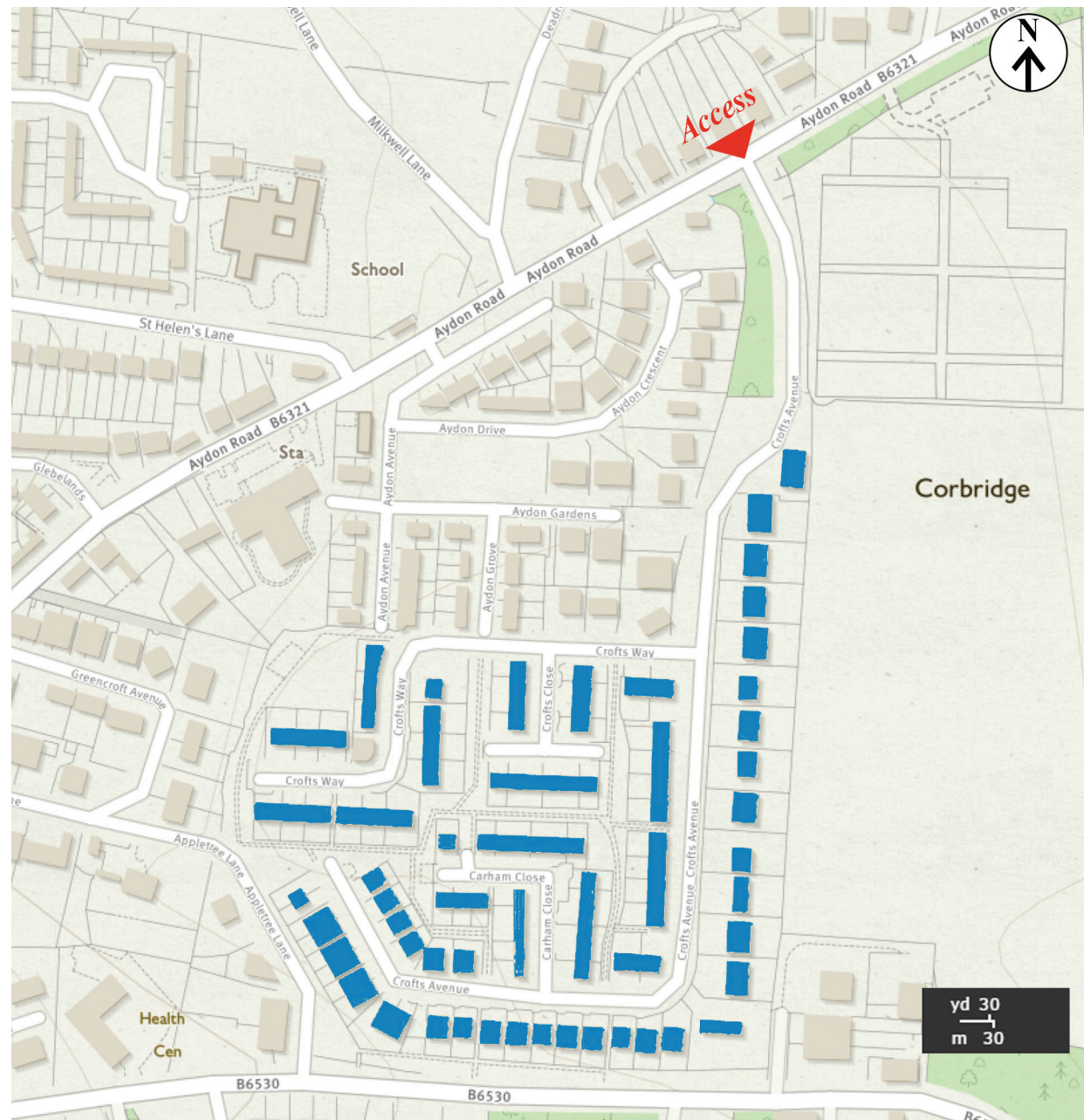


Figure 9.17: The Croft Estate, demonstrates the use of the Radburn model in housing during this period. This plan demonstrates how vehicle access to the development is limited to one entrance/ exit.





Figure 9.18: A bungalow in The Croft Estate, its arrangement of the back garden and the addition of a front door, are suggestive of its use as the primary entrance.

are orientated away from the road towards the pedestrianised side of the properties, with the intention of reducing noise (Figure 9.18). Entering through the porch into the living room, access has reverted to the rear of the properties, making the kitchen the primary entrance space. In

practice, most of the pedestrianised spaces between the houses are under used, with access and social interactions taking place at what were meant to be the backs of the properties. Will no real interconnectivity with the surrounding existing pedestrian routes, and no amenities to access, these

areas simply serve the houses (Alexander 2009, Powers 2007).

In essence, the use of cul-de-sacs and the Radburn approach within the planning of estates, reduce interaction with more established routes within Corbridge. Whilst they create a physical entity and a perception of exclusivity, they are also isolated from more established areas of the town. In terms of form and aesthetic, there is little relationship between these properties and the character of traditional houses in Corbridge. As with 1930s semi-detached housing, there is a ubiquity to the design of the houses in the Croft Estate. There are two other developments of this period in the town, Glebelands and Priory Gardens. Both are located at the North West, with access to the A69 and follow similar typology. The use of the cul-de-sacs and the Radburn approach in the planning of these estates, also serves to reduce interaction with more established pedestrian and vehicular routes. It is a similar story to the Croft Estate throughout, with underused pedestrian spaces.

At North Eastern extremity of Corbridge, is the Jameson Drive Estate. It was constructed in the 1990s and is unique



among 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments in Corbridge, as it attempts to give an impression of individuality in house design. Consisting of two cul-de-sacs, Jameson Drive and Cragside, there are six house types, one of which is a bungalow; expressing individuality through detail and material specification. What is immediately noticeable is the accommodation for cars within this scheme. This development does not attempt segregation between vehicles and pedestrians, it instead focuses on provision for car storage. Much external space dedicated to parking, as is within the footprint of the properties. Many of the larger houses have twin garages constructed as separate buildings, maintaining the aesthetic treatment afforded to the houses. The garages dominate the front aspects of the houses (Figure 9.19). There are references to various periods of architecture, from Elizabethan to Victorian with the housing forms relying on the semi-detached properties of the 1930s. The illusion of individuality plays into the very English notion of home as castle (Lewis 2014). Whilst many of these new build properties offer the buyer an immediate pre-packaged housing solution, they also cater for different levels of status. Similar to other



Figure 9.19: The dominance of the garage and hard surfacing in the Jameson Drive estate, the footprint of which exceeds many larger earlier properties in Corbridge.

cul-de-sac estates, Jamieson Drive offers a degree of exclusivity and serves to control access to the houses. This estate continues the principle of segregation from the established town (Minton 2009), with its location being closer to the A69 than the town centre. In 1998 proposals

to extend the Jameson Drive and Cragside developments were rejected. At the turn of the century, Tynedale Council (2000) adopted a different strategy to Jamieson Drive, Cragside and other 20<sup>th</sup> Century housing developments in the town. It issued a planning brief for the development





Figure 9.20: The distribution of properties in the Jameson Drive development, with large amounts of land afforded to each plot.

of The Chains, on what was an area of allotment space in close proximity to the centre of Corbridge. It stipulated the development of mixed housing, which should be terraced and make use of courtyard groupings. The guidelines made a clear point about avoiding detached and semi-detached properties. The houses should be two storeys with a small amount in three storeys (Figure 9.20). This is a move away from 20<sup>th</sup> Century development in Corbridge, with many properties from the 1930s onwards being detached and semi-detached in form.

The Chains development was actually opposed by local residents and the Parish Council, due to the proposal removing a local amenity. The proposed development, was to be situated on a site occupied by allotments, originally gifted by the Duke of Northumberland in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The community valued these allotments and were keen not to lose them. There was a perception by the existing residents that the proposed houses would not be an asset to them, only to the developers and potential incoming residents. Therefore, the proposals also led to concerns about increased traffic and the effect on Corbridge and its character. Whilst there was opposition to this development by the

community, the planning perspective was that there was a housing shortfall within the area. An uneasy compromise was that the Planning Authority required particular standards regarding design quality, and they were upheld by the developer. The development of The Chains went ahead and was completed in 2006, but it prompted the publication of a Corbridge Village Plan (Corbridge Parish Council, 2006). The first part of the Plan was a survey conducted by the Parish Council, which reflected concerns about the quantity of residential development in Corbridge from 2001-2006, stating that 86% of those who took part in the survey felt that too much development had occurred.

The Chains is the only significant development in the town during the 21st Century, which in part reflects local opinion that too much development has taken place in the area, although the picture is complicated by a world recession. The Plan expressed a consensus with regard to the type of development that the community would prefer. 80% of the 421 households polled, felt that all future development should be low cost starter homes for the benefit of local people (Corbridge Parish Council, 2006). As one of the consultees for both planning policy



Figure 9.21: The Chains development, with its mixture of property types and locally derived design. The area of field in the image was originally the allotment spaces.

and significant planning applications, the Parish Council was aiming to influence Tynedale District Council. The first measure within the design guidance for future development in Corbridge, states that a mix of styles should be avoided within housing developments, whilst at the same time a mix of housing types should be encouraged. Developments at Jameson Drive and Craggside can be seen as mixed in terms of type, however it is an example of a mix of styles as well (Figure 9.21). Another aspect of the proposed

guidance was that the development of any new estates should be in small parcels. The Plan is a reflection of housing developments that have been imposed on them, encouraging more people into the town, without benefit for local people. However, as there have been no significant new houses since the Chains, its effectiveness is yet to be tested.

The Chains responds to the requirements set out by Tynedale District Council prior to its design and construction. However,





Figure 9.22: The Chains development, with its mixture of property types and locally derived design. The area of field in the image was originally the allotment spaces.

the lack of local design guidance at the time contributes to the notion that it does not really respond to existing housing in the centre of Corbridge. In layout, it follows a similar approach to the Croft Estate in the segregation of cars and pedestrians but due to its proximity to the centre, it cannot be in keeping with the evolution of the town prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The Radburn principles direct vehicle access and parking to the rear of the properties (Figure 9.22), again making the rear of the properties the primary

means of access. Much of the surrounding pedestrian areas have been relegated to pedestrian circulation routes, moving from the centre of Corbridge to St Helen's Lane. Part of the design may have emerged from the stipulation that vehicle access could only be made via St Helen's Lane. It was also required by the local authority, that much of the site should remain as open space. This was achieved by a L shaped layout of the houses, enclosing what was the allotment area. However, there has been minimal landscaping and just appears

as an open field, with criss-cross paths acting primarily as pedestrian through routes. Whilst there is the provision of a small playground, this area is not utilised fully for recreation, probably because it feels exposed in the field. Nevertheless, the mix of scale and positioning of buildings goes some way to address the problems faced when designing larger developments, and contrasts with the 20<sup>th</sup> Century housing estates in the town. Yet, even the Chains does not reinforce the ambience of the traditional market town nor offer a 21<sup>st</sup> Century interpretation of a regional domestic architecture.

## 9.5 Conclusion

Examining the development of Corbridge, highlights the increase in national and international influence, which correspond with the development of transport. The introduction of turnpikes, rail and latterly motorways has transformed the town. The introduction of new ideas and the ability to transport construction materials, changed the traditional approaches to the design and use of houses. It has been established that the influence of national architectural styles has been present in Corbridge from its earliest existing housing. Which raises questions



of regional identity in architecture and the extent to which it can be assessed. A more in-depth analysis of the architecture in Corbridge in the next chapter 10.0 *Analysis of Housing Development in Corbridge*. It will seek to establish the regional qualities of architecture in the and establish the changes which have taken place in the development of housing. The commodification of housing, linked with technological advances seen nationally; introduced changes to the density and planning of new development. Traditional patterns of development were replaced with approaches which are reflected nationally. In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the scale of development increases beyond the boundaries established in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Much of the expansion in development in this period is connected with increases in population.

The effect of this expansion brought about challenges from the local community, in relation to the impact of new development on the town. Opposition to new development is a response identified nationally in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, with increasing public awareness of the protection of historic environments. Historically planning was governed by district councils, who had more localised

knowledge in examining planning applications. The advent of unitary authority control, means that decisions are made over wider areas possibly with less knowledge of the location and environment.

The use of land in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century increased the size of the town, but also protected its centre as there was little room for new development. Though Jameson Drive is on the very periphery of the town, it raised concerns for the local community, regarding increased traffic and its impact on the historic centre. The development of The Chains in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is significant as it is the first development since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century to be built in proximity to the historic centre. The strategies and design of this this development will be examined in greater detail in section 11.0 *Analysis of the Chains Development in Corbridge*. This will establish the design approaches taken, in relating the development to the historic centre. It will inform the development of the design framework.

## *10.0 Analysis of Housing Development in Corbridge*

## 10.0 Analysis of Housing Development in Corbridge.

### 10.1 Introduction

In order to establish the context in which new development takes place, it is key to understand the existing pattern of development. By using the principals established in the analysis chapter. This will form the basis for the visual analysis. It will establish the primary characteristics of development in different periods and their response to the established styles and building patterns.

### 10.2 Pre 19th Century Development

#### *Type*

Housing development in Corbridge historically occurred, in close proximity to thoroughfares. Many pre 19<sup>th</sup> Century developments follow this pattern. The housing is a mixture of detached and terraced properties. The terraces or rows, are comprised of individual and grouped infill properties. They are small developments of between two and four properties. Surviving houses provide evidence of this approach, from early 18<sup>th</sup> Century (Figure 10.1).



Figure 10.1: A map of the centre of Corbridge, with terraces and rows containing early development highlighted in green (Ordnance Survey 2015).





Figure 10.2: The amendment of earlier properties in Corbridge is common, the buildings which now make up The Black Bull Public House were originally two single fronted cottages and a double-fronted farm house.



Figure 10.3: Two of the three early cottages on Hill Street, which in comparison with the other houses on the street are far smaller.

The work of Brunskill (2001) and Prior (2010) support the idea that row housing and infill development pre-date this period. Like many market towns properties front doorways, tend to open directly onto the street. The established roads and streets are on an East-West axis, this is a result development along routes towards Newcastle and Carlisle. Buildings which deviate from this pattern are high status properties, which can be classified as detached. Monksholme dates to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and Cross House which was built in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Much of the architecture in this period, is located in the centre of Corbridge and is significant in contributing to the visual appearance of the town. Many of the houses show signs of alteration and amendment, reflecting changing patterns of domesticity and use (Figure 10.2).

It is this visible continuity of development that contributes to what can be termed its character. The houses in the centre are reflective of local interpretations of national styles, they use material and form which are present throughout the Tyne Valley (Dickinson 2000). The architectural styles present can be viewed as national and reflect the wider influence of classicism. The earliest buildings date



from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, with Monksholme, being the most prominent. There are also three cottages on Hill Street, which are far smaller in size and height, than a majority of houses in the centre of this period (Figure 10.3 previous page). Their construction and materiality, would indicate that they are very early stone built houses; which have been amended at some point in their history. A majority of houses from the start of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century onwards reflect a more pared down interpretation of classicism (Figure 10.4). In both instances, they are characterised by more localised responses to these styles (Pevsner 1994). What unifies both approaches, is a shared materiality which reflects responses to localised material availability. As can be observed at a national level, the use of pitched roofs is a response to climatic conditions (Oliver 2003). All would have originally been heather thatch, which was the prevalent roofing material in Northumberland prior to stone and slate (Brunskill 2001).

### *Form*

The form of many houses in Corbridge corresponds with other villages and towns in the Tyne Valley. They are reflective of a building typology associated with



Figure 10.4: A comparison of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century row houses, on Front Street. The 18<sup>th</sup> Century houses demonstrate a more simplified approach to aesthetic. While two of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century properties make reference to Monksholme.



Figure 10.5: An example of a catslide roof in the centre of Corbridge, which shows the rear of the roof dropping off to the height of the ground floor (Google Maps 2015).



Figure 10.6: Monksholme c1644 with prominent projected dormers, which are referenced in subsequent periods.



Figure 10.7: A section of what is now the Black Bull Public House, showing the 2:1 ratio of wall to roof.

local materiality and climatic factors (Brunskill 2001). All of the buildings surveyed from this period, feature pitched roofs. This is the most common approach found nationally, the familiarity of this approach with crafts people and builders, contributed to its ease of construction. There are also buildings in this period also make use of catslide roofs, with one pitch continuing below eaves height (Figure 10.5). This provided greater depth to a building and increased internal space without increasing the ridge height. The use of the catslide is not confined to any particular grouping or type, but it does allow for a continuity of ridge height to be sustained when building in rows. Buildings which do not follow this form are of a higher status and are suggestive of a link between status and complexity. Monksholme features two gabled dormers (Figure 10.6) and Cross House a single centrally located gable. The form of these buildings is in contrast to the simpler forms examined, distinguishing them in terms of status.

There is an increase in the height of walls and a reduction in roof height, which also correlates with an increase in the number of floors in individual and higher status houses (Figure 10.7). Many houses



have a wall height to roof height ratio of approximately 2:1 or 3:1 dependant on the number of storeys. This correlates with the growth of Corbridge in this period both physically and economically.

### *Scale*

The scale of buildings in this period has been influenced by the evolution of the localised built form. A majority of houses are two storeys. Larger houses tend to occupy individual plots or are placed at the end of rows. The process of infill development in Corbridge has shaped scale, of many of the buildings in the centre. The material limitations of earlier development, have also contributed to this established scale. As new buildings were introduced into existing rows, many mirrored adjoining properties (Figure 10.8). It is the higher status buildings of this period which exaggerate scale to emphasise status. The relationship to human scale is also evident, particularly in lower status houses; with many reflecting the size of people who constructed or inhabited them (Figure 10.9).

### *Proportion*

The predominant shape of façades is



Figure 10.8: A montage of the properties on Middle Street. The angle of the images, does not reveal the full roof but examining the height of the eaves, there is a clear relationship between adjoining properties of different periods.



Figure 10.9: Cross House is an example of 18<sup>th</sup> Century design, its status is expressed alongside adjacent smaller properties. It clearly demonstrates the use of a proportional system set over 6 bays (Google Maps 2015).



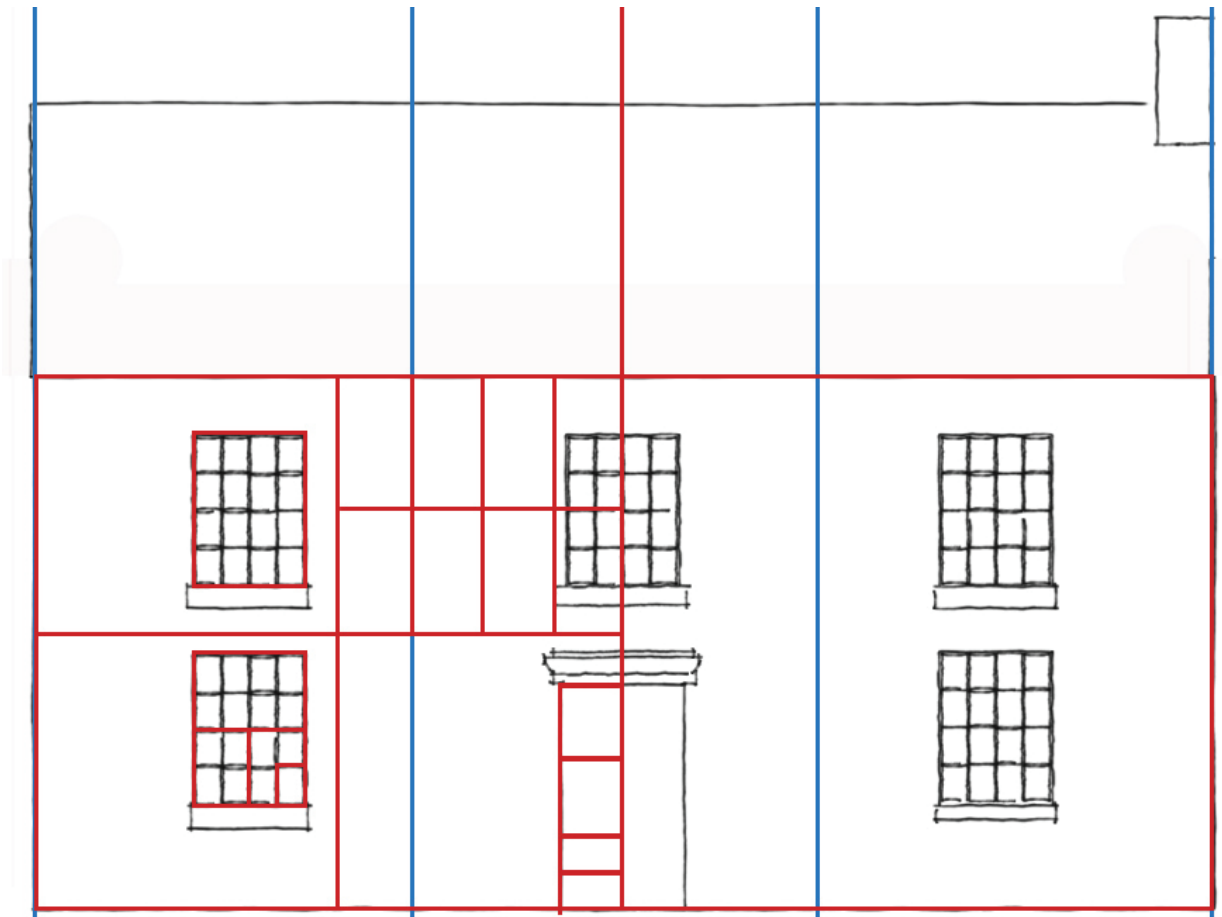


Figure 10.10: Double fronted property, demonstrating its subdivision with use of the golden section.

rectangular, with openings relating to the overall composition. Analysing the composition of façades on a majority of houses in this period, reveals the use of a proportional system. This may be based on the Golden Section, or its simplification the cube or square and a half. The openings and other features such as pediments, plinths and quoins also correspond with this, on double and single fronted properties. Double fronted properties follow a symmetrical design, with the doorway placed on the central axis of the facade (Figure 10.10). Single fronted properties tend to be handed, with doorways set next to each other, alluding to a unified whole; or set in bays one after another.

### *Rhythm*

The use of rhythm in the design of domestic architecture is evident in a majority of development. Many houses are built in groups of two and four. The use of rhythm in their design, is expressed in the placement and spacing of bays. The two main arrangements seen in Corbridge are an alternation of bays, the first containing the windows and the second the entrance. Which can be read door-window-door-window. The other typology identified

(Figure 10.11), are handed properties, with the bays containing doors set side by side. They often occur in groups of four with the outer bays mirrored. These present a more unified whole, similar to the double fronted properties of this period. These can be read as window-door-door-window. A majority of houses in rows alter in width reflecting the plan of the house, with wider bays carrying window openings for living spaces and narrower bays used for door ways.

Double fronted properties are primarily made up of three bays arranged equally. They tend to be larger and comprise of two and two and a half storey houses. They affect their own individual rhythm, through the use of three bays, but due to a shared use of classical proportions still relate to other housing types. They are also most commonly placed at the end of rows, which would have granted more space for construction. Individual higher status buildings of the period, reflect different approaches to rhythm.

Monksholme is the most distinctive building in Corbridge. Built in the Jacobean style, it is comprised of five bays and is symmetrical with a mirrored façade (Figure 10.12). The rhythm in the design



Figure 10.11: Mirrored arrangement of houses on Middle Street, demonstrating the placement and rhythm of the bays.

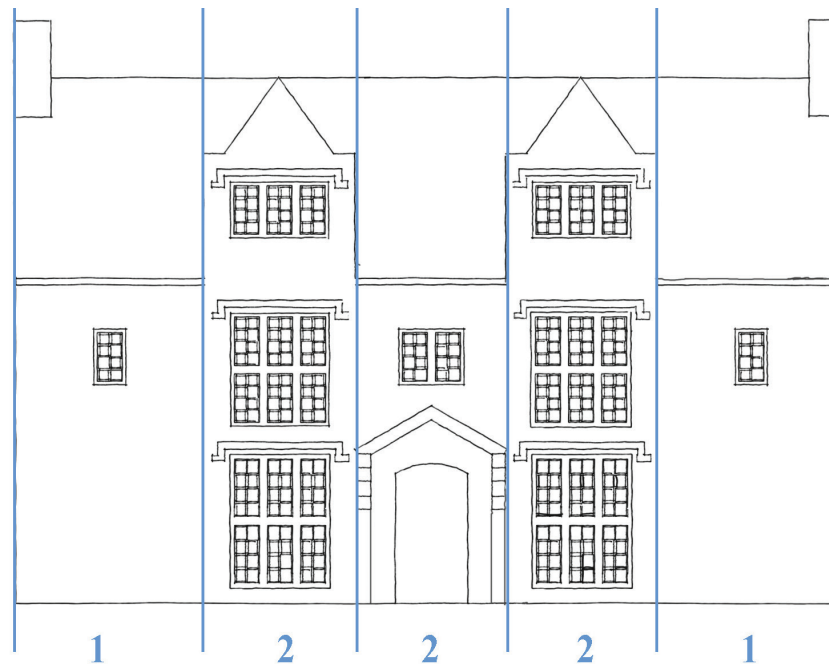


Figure 10.12: The rhythm and design of bays in Monksholme is reflective of Jacobean architecture, framing the entrance with the strong vertical emphasis of the gabled bays.

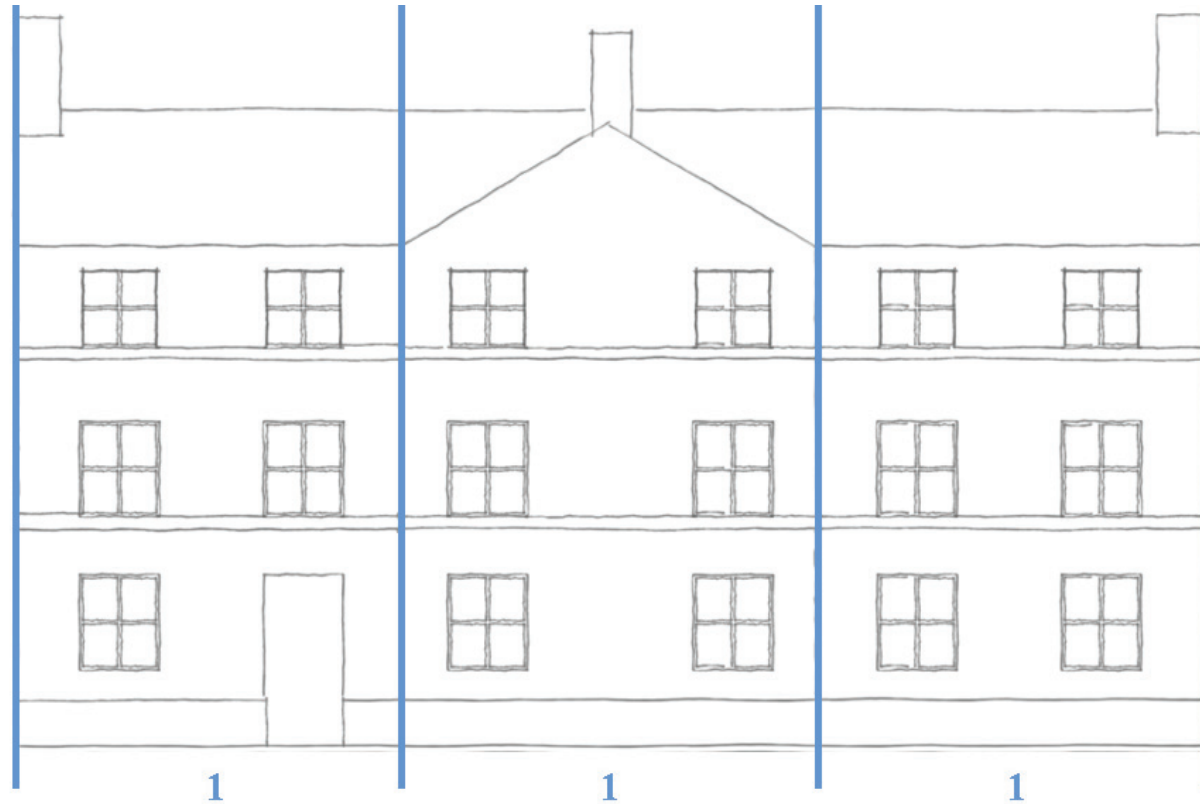


Figure 10.13: Cross House demonstrates a pared down approach to classicism and the subdivision of the facade.

of the building is distinct, it comprises of two broad outside bays with an individual small window placed in each. This is followed by two narrower bays which carry larger windows associated with the living spaces. These bays are distinguished with the use of projected gable dormers. The Central bay mirrors the width of the dormer bays and contains the entrance with a small window above. The overall rhythm being, broad-narrow-narrow-narrow-broad.

Cross House (Figure 10.13) is the other high status building of this period, it differs from Monksholme as it more directly reflects national approaches to classical architecture at the start of the 18th Century. It is two and a half storeys in height which mirrors other 18<sup>th</sup> Century development in the town. The façade is split into three equal bays, with six windows per panel. Rhythm is introduced through the placement of windows along with a central projected bay which features a triangular pediment. It is higher status than other buildings in Corbridge, it is similar in aesthetic and rhythm. What unifies all of the buildings in the town is an emphasis on the vertical alignment of openings in buildings. Window openings are rectangular and correspond



approximately with the golden section. In two and a half storey houses the top row of windows are square, but mirror the width of rectangular openings.

### *Material, Construction and Detail*

Houses in Corbridge were initially constructed in timber, with a shift in materiality towards stone, occurring in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Much of the domestic construction in the Tyne Valley, makes use of locally sourced buff sandstone. A majority of the regular stone work of this period is spoilia, sourced from Dilston Hall which fell out of use in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century (Figure 10.14). Financially dressed stone added cost to a building project, so as a resource Dilston Hall provided a ready means of construction. A majority of developments in Corbridge are of irregular stone, often supported by quoins at the ends of the external walls. The quoins used tend to be regular and were also possibly sourced from Dilston hall. The irregular stonework much like dry stone work was a fully bespoke means of construction, relying on the expertise of the crafts person to asses, grade and place the stone; in a manner which would provide a cohesive whole (Brunskill 2001). Heather was used as the primarily



Figure 10.14: A view along Hill Street, showing the various types of stonework used in Corbridge.

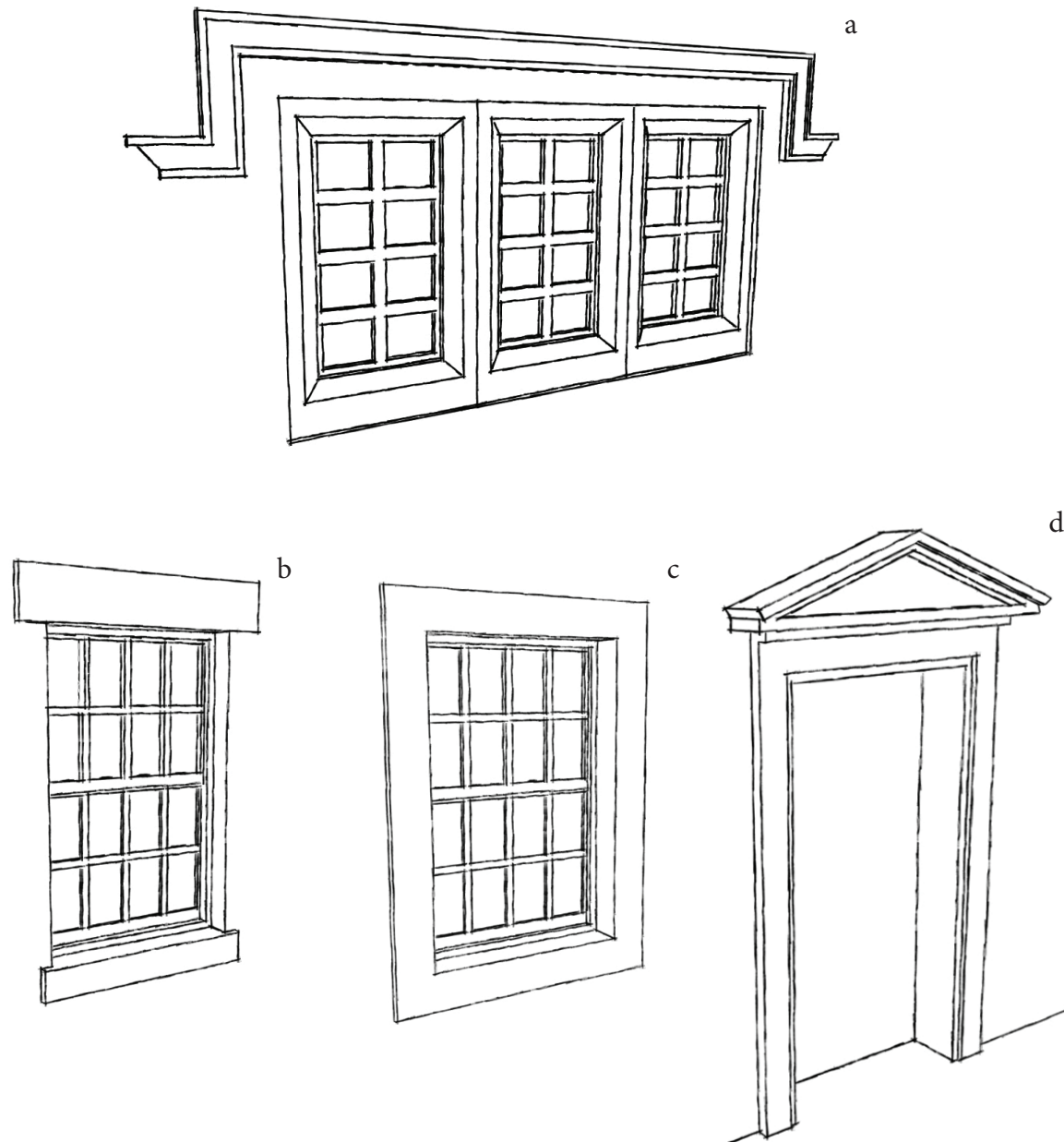


Figure 10.15: Pre 19<sup>th</sup> Century details, a) Hood Moulding, b) Stone lintels and sills, c) Stone window surround, d) neoclassical pediment.

roofing material in the Tyne Valley, it was then superseded by sandstone flags. There is no natural source for slate in the county, which is why stone roofs were dominant until the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century (Grundy 1994).

The architectural details, are significant in influencing successive periods of development (Figure 10.15). Monksholme features hood mouldings, which are a feature of many houses of in the Tyne Valley Grundy (1994). The introduction of pediments, on the façade of Cross House, and some doorways in the town are reflective of classical architecture and the status attached to it. The use of quoins to frame doorways, is another feature replicated in later development. Properties of this period, use sash-windows the rectangular shape of openings reflecting this. These tended to be split window panes, some of which are still present.

### 10.3 19<sup>th</sup> Century Development

#### Type

Development in this period is representative of shift in emphasis, from creating housing for a specific client; to creating housing without a client. The housing was designed with the



intention of appealing to prospective buyers, in a growing housing market. The developments make use of repetition and benefit from bulk purchasing of materials and greater scheduling of labour. There are three types of groupings in this period. The terrace is the most prevalent grouping, occurring as infill and new housing. This mixture of infill and new development, is positioned parallel to existing streets (Figure 10.16). Smaller developments are located in close proximity to the centre of the town, with larger development occurring on the outskirts; along established routes. Terraces vary in size the smallest being comprised of four properties and the largest numbering fifteen. There are clear similarities in the development which occurs outskirts of the town, on Corchester Lane and Stagshaw Road. (Figure 10.17). This is suggestive of one developer being responsible for developments in this area of the town. There is a difference in terms of approach to development on the outskirts, in comparison with that of the centre. The design of infill developments in the centre has the front door open directly onto the street mirroring earlier development. Development outside of this area incorporates small front garden spaces, which create a degree of segregation from



Figure 10.16: A small 19<sup>th</sup> Century development on Princes Street, which mirrors earlier architecture found in the centre, with the addition of an Arts & Crafts inspired turret or tower single bay property.



Figure 10.17: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Development on Corchester Lane, of handed properties forming a symmetrical composition, with detailing which alludes to aspects of traditional architecture.



the public realm. There is also a type of semi-detached property on Aydon Road. It is comprised of two properties side by side, mirroring each other. The second is more distinctive and resembles a large double fronted Victorian property, orientated side on to the road exposing the gable. It is split down the middle in-line with the roof ridge, each side opening out into a garden space (Figure 10.18). There is evidence of amendment to existing buildings. The use of stone window and door surrounds, introduced into earlier buildings is visible. The finish and standardisation of these elements are suggestive of more precise cutting or machining.



Figure 10.18: Semi-detached property on Aydon Road, with ornate barge-board.

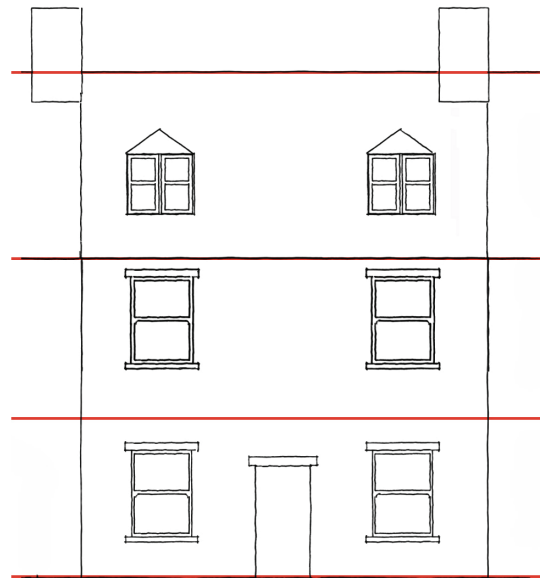


Figure 10.19: 2:1 ratio of many 19<sup>th</sup> Century developments.

### *Form*

The houses in the centre mirror the scale established in earlier development. They have an approximate wall to roof ratio of 2:1. Instead of incorporating the half story, they make use of dormer windows set in the attic space (Figure 10.19). New terraced developments are similar in scale to the larger two and a half storey houses from the 18th Century and have an approximate wall to roof ratio of approximately 2.5:1 (Figure 10.20). Bay windows represent a change to the overall shape and form of houses in this

period. The majority of bay windows are in development away from the centre and are located on the ground floor. Some of the houses in the centre feature bays on the first floor, to avoid obstructing the pavement.

Only four houses in Corbridge have bay windows which are over two storeys, they are also distinctive as they are timber and

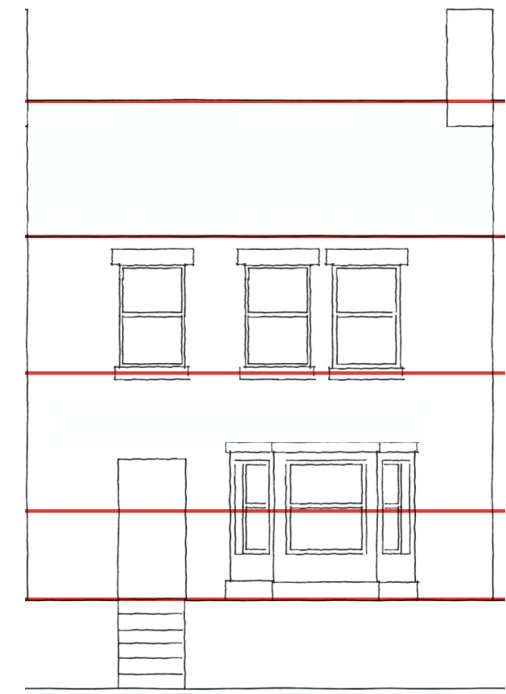


Figure 10.20: Victorian terrace with bay window and two aligned first floor windows, with a wall to roof ratio of 2.5:1.

rectangular in plan. Certain buildings also reference Monksholme, through the use of dormer gables, clearly relating their shape and form to earlier development in the town (Figure 10.21). The use of catslides in this period like earlier development, provides more living space on the lower floors, contributing to an asymmetry of form.



Figure 10.21: A development on Princes Street which references the dormer gables of Monksholme.



Figure 10.22: This mixed row of houses on St Helens Road, demonstrates the similarity between the scale of early development in the town and subsequent infill development.

### *Scale*

The primary building material in this period is imperial brick, which despite this change in construction, it is sympathetic to the established scale in the town centre (Figure 10.22). Larger scale developments of terraced housing are very similar in scale to their Georgian counterparts, the difference is the number of properties located in proximity to one another.

This produces a change in scale towards larger concentrations of taller buildings. The detached mansions of the period, defy established scale with some being four storey properties, but due to their placement in large grounds, they are not visible from the roads and in turn isolated from other development.





Figure 10.23: 19<sup>th</sup> Century infill development in the town centre, following a wide-narrow-narrow-wide rhythm.



Figure 10.24: Terraced properties on Corchester Lane, with bay windows and single and double vertically aligned first floor windows.

### *Proportion*

A more consistent approach to proportion occurs in housing of this period, vertically orientated window openings are more regular in size. Greater standardisation is in part responsible for a more uniform expression of proportion. Imperial brick dimensions are based upon the golden section and reflect this in which ever orientation they are arranged. The façades still retain a rectilinear shape, in which the openings are proportionally related to the overall whole (Yorke 2005).

### *Rhythm*

Rhythm in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century is similar to earlier development, wide bays contain windows which correspond with the main living spaces. The bays in the centre of town contain either a single or double set of windows aligned vertically (Figure 10.23). Developments of terraced houses away from the centre follow similar arrangement, many have bay windows on the ground floor with a single or double set of first floor windows aligned vertically. The narrower bay on all housing types of this period contains the front door and a single window on the first floor, which is vertically aligned (Figure 10.24).



The rhythm established in the centre is similar to earlier development, with the arrangement of bays following a pattern of narrow-wide-narrow-wide, with the other arrangement being wide-narrow-narrow-wide. The later has doorways arranged side by side.

This arrangement is similar to the rhythm established in double fronted properties, with doorways located in the central bay, with or without the addition of a window aligned on the first floor. Outer bays have centrally aligned windows, with the addition of bay windows on the ground floor of approximately half of the development in this period. The rhythm established in these properties is, broad-narrow-broad.

### *Material, Construction and Detail*

The majority of façades in this period use buff sandstone for lintels, window sills and quoins. The stone work used on the façades of houses, is either dressed or irregular depending on location. Many houses feature stone quoins that are more regular in length and height than earlier examples. The primary building material is imperial brick and is most commonly arranged in English bond (Figure 10.25).



Figure 10.25: End gable of terraced housing, showing buff stone cladding, quoins and English bond brick-work.

With a small proportion of lower status buildings using the garden wall bond. The use of brick in these developments provides a more cost effective means of construction. The advantages brick has over other building materials of the time, is the standardisation of proportions. The portability of bricks and uniformity allowed for greater speed in construction, being a self-referencing construction material. The benefit of brick as a unit is its regularity in comparison with stone. There is also a change in roofing materials away from locally sourced material, to the use of slate from Cumbria and Wales (Mathesius 1984).

Development in this period uses the roof space, to form attics which are lit using dormer windows. Dormer windows allowed for the creation of another storey, without exceeding the height of the existing housing in Corbridge.

The window openings are designed to accommodate sash windows and maintain a pronounced reveal. The ability of industry to create larger panes of glass, is demonstrated by the amount of single pane glazing in surviving sash casements (Mathesius 1984). The Victorian and



Figure 10.26: The level of detail on this development demonstrates the degree of embellishment used in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The re-imagining of earlier ornament such as hood mouldings is also evident.

Edwardian period sees a greater degree of external embellishment. Much of the new development that occurs away from the centre, shows the influence of Arts and Crafts movement. Features such as neo-vernacular timber work, fretted barge boards and decorative finial are common in many of the new developments. References to local buildings are also present, in particular aspects of form and aesthetics associated with Monksholme (Figure 10.26). Several developments also feature timber external porches and bay windows which incorporate decorative work. They do however represent a change in speculative building in Corbridge, as their materiality and ornament do not reference existing buildings in the town.

#### 10.4 Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Development

##### *Type*

Prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, houses in Corbridge had been closer in design to the existing development in the town centre. There are two developments which date to the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, both of which follow the earlier established terrace typology. A development of four properties on Stagshaw Road which date to 1912 and two terraces of five properties



Figure 10.27: Housing on Well Bank demonstrates the transition of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century development, towards the semi-detached housing of the inter-war period. Changes in materiality and the shape and proportion of openings distinguish it from 19<sup>th</sup> Century development.

and three properties on Well Bank (Figure 10.27). These developments reflect earlier development patterns. In terms of design and materiality they mark a departure from the existing housing of Corbridge, this will be discussed in subsequent sections. There is no development in Corbridge until the inter-war period and the introduction of semi-detached housing.

A majority of development in this period is arranged in cul-de-sacs in proximity to the primary routes out of Corbridge. In terms of the scale and the footprint afforded, they represent a substantial phase of development. Properties of this period are reflective of national trends in terms of the external space afforded to them. Provision for car ownership, also adds to



the footprint of housing plots. It further increases the separation of property from the road. (Stevenson 2007). The primary form of amendment to houses of this period, is the construction of single storey garages, which occupy the space between properties.

### *Form*

The developments built at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century share similar aspects of form to the terraced development which preceded it, inter-war development differs in shape and form. A majority of inter-war development uses hipped roofs, there are also two properties which have gambrel



Figure 10.28: An example of the gambrel roof, at the Aydon Road development.



Figure 10.29: The horizontal emphasis of the window openings in inter-war development. The hipped roofs also give a downward emphasis to the composition as a whole.

roofs. This represents a significant change in form and a move away from the long established use of pitched roofs. There is no evidence of these roof types being used historically, in Corbridge or Northumberland. The ratio of wall to roof in hipped roof development is 2:1, with gambrel roof properties having a ratio of 1:1.5 (Figure 10.28). There is less emphasis on the vertical, instead many properties reference the horizontal,

the effect of this is broader elevations (Figure 10.29). These changes contribute to a significant shift away from the established forms found in Corbridge, to more universal forms which are derived from Garden City design and in turn the influence of cottage design based on examples from the South of England (Lewis 2003).





Figure 10.30: The arrangement of bays on this early 20<sup>th</sup> Century terrace differs from earlier development, by producing an entire terrace of double fronted properties. The diminished roof height is also evident in this period.

### *Scale*

The scale of the terraced developments at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, is close to the established scale in the centre of Corbridge. The semi-detached housing that occurs in this period is physically similar in scale to two storey development in the centre. The apparent scale of these houses is effected by a move away from the vertical emphasis of opening seen in earlier development. The orientation of windows in development of this period instead is horizontal, this is further emphasised by angle of roof hips which further emphasise a more horizontal appearance. Whilst buildings in this period are not physically smaller, there appearance gives this impression.

### *Proportion*

The use of brick in itself is a form of proportional control. The wider aspect of adjoining semi-detached properties, still correspond with the use of a proportional system, each side representing an expression of the golden section. The vertical emphasis of openings in façade, is replaced with horizontal openings. The relationship of the openings to the overall proportions of the façade is retained.

### *Rhythm*

The rhythm of the terraces in this period, is similar to that of terraced houses found in the centre of Corbridge. All have a narrow bay which contains the front

door and window and a wider bay which contains the openings associated with the living spaces. The development on Stagshaw Road mirrors the 19<sup>th</sup> Century development in this location, with two gables at either end of the terrace, bookending the development. Unlike earlier development it is comprised of double fronted properties, with bays arranged wide-narrow-wide, along the terrace (Figure 10.30). The semi-detached properties are similar to earlier detached properties. They are evenly arranged, with a space between each pairing. Each pair is symmetrical with two narrow outer bays in which the door is placed with a window above. The two inner bays are wider and contain openings which serve the living spaces, reading narrow-wide-wide-

narrow. The overall composition gives the impression of a unified whole, intended to elevate the status of the properties.

### *Material, Construction and Detail*

As with 19<sup>th</sup> Century development, the construction material is imperial brick. In approximately half of developments examined, this is accompanied by pebble dashed rendering to the first floor façade. This approach is evident from the start of the century and is associated with timber framed building. The roofs of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments, use slate, but the adoption of pan tiles becomes more prevalent. Window sills are no longer cut stone, but comprise of brick as are the lintels.

This change in specification represents a further move away from the established materiality of the town. It is reflective of changes in surface, colour and texture, which over time have contributed to the architectural character of the town. The most visually apparent change in construction, is to openings in the facade. This coincides with more widespread use of steel lintels in construction. Their use allowed for larger horizontal openings, due



Figure 10.31: There are no properties from this period which feature the original window casements, however new casements are still set with the same reveal.

to the ability to span larger distances than with stone. This led to the introduction of larger horizontal window casements, saving time and money. The traditional use of stone lintels and sills in these projects are replaced with soldier and sailor brick courses (Stevenson 2007).

The use of larger window casements and their installation flush with the facade, diminishes the reveal in comparison to earlier development (Figure 10.31). Bay windows in this period are semi-circular

or rectangular in plan. Constructed from timber with a brick plinth at ground floor level. Two storey bays are clad between floors in hung tile, another reference to traditional building. Some houses feature a large shed roofed canopy, covering the doorway and bay window, which further obscures the façade.



## 10.5 Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Development

### Type

Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century development set a precedent for a gradual move away from the established centre, opting for greater use of land on the outskirts of the town. There is little development in the post-war period, it is not until the 1960s that house building resumes in Corbridge. The development in this period is a mix of bungalows and houses, arranged in terraced, semi-detached and detached groupings. The planning of schemes in this period follows two strategies, the cul-de-sac and the Radburn model. Glebelands, which is comprised of 36 semi-detached and terraced properties, follows the cul-de-sac pattern. Like development in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, access is reduced to one entry point, limiting through traffic and pedestrian activity.

The Croft Estate is comprised of 100 properties; it is the largest development in Corbridge up to this point. The groupings are small terraces, semi-detached and detached properties. Housing types are a mixture of bungalows and two storey houses (Figure 10.32). In a departure from earlier development patterns, The

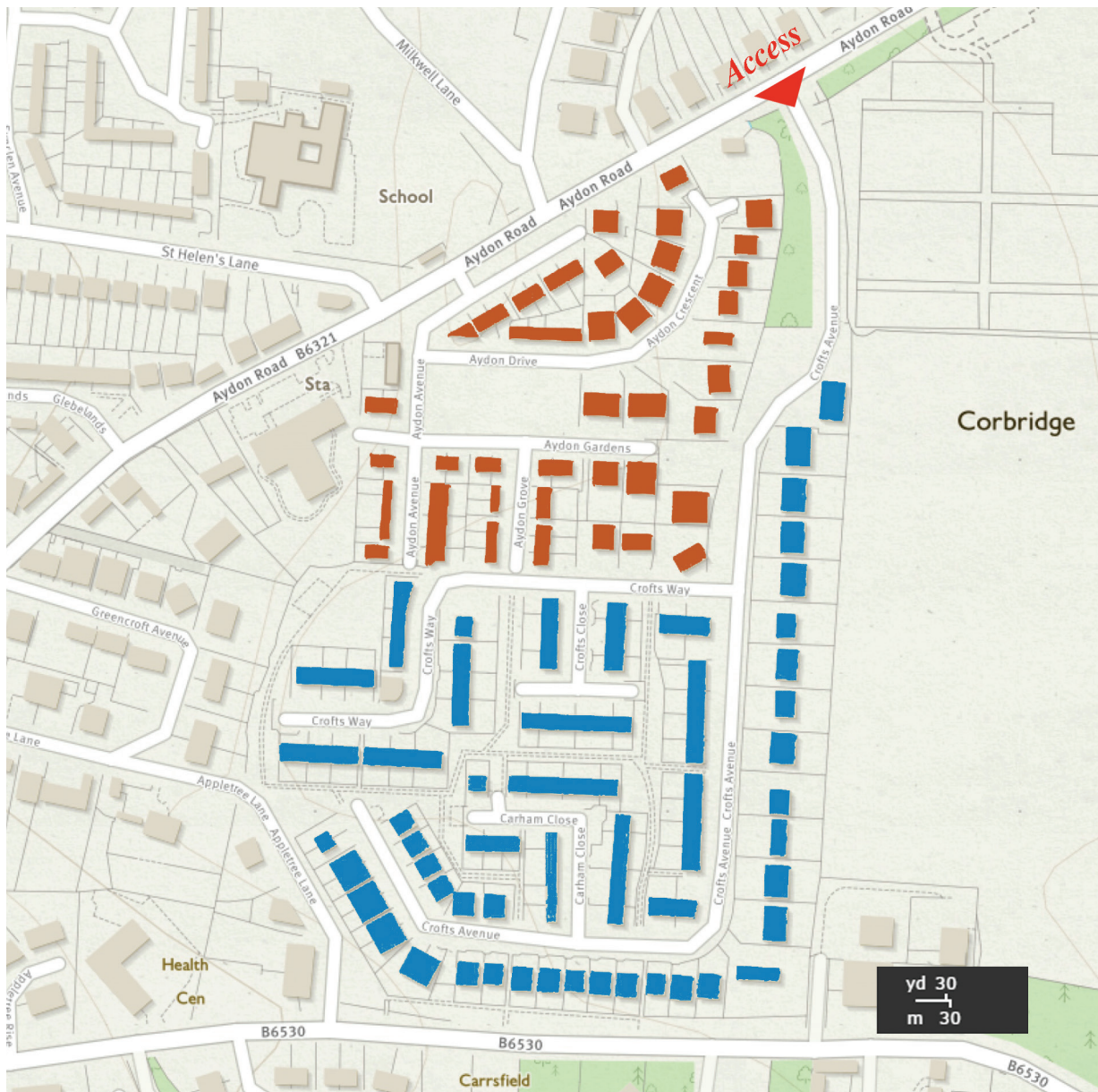


Figure 10.32: A map showing the Croft Estate in blue and the inter-war development of Aydon Road in tan. The traffic being routed to front of the 1930s development and located to the rear of The Croft Estate via Crofts Avenue (Ordnance Survey 2015).



Croft Estate makes use of the Radburn model. In plan, the estate is defined by the placement of bungalows at its boundaries facing outwards; with vehicular access at the rear. The housing is located at the centre of the scheme. Living spaces are orientated away from the road towards the pedestrianised side of the properties, with the intention of reducing noise. The principal of locating vehicular access to the rear of the properties in this scheme, has created a reversed effect. What were intended to be the rears of the properties, act as the fronts of these properties. Much of the pedestrianised spaces around the development under used, with no real interconnectivity with the surrounding existing pedestrian routes. The emphasis on vehicular access, has meant social interactions take place at what were meant to be the rear of the properties. The development of Glebelands and The Croft Estate, are located in close proximity to the Aydon Road development of the 1930s.

Two developments occur in this period which are situated in close proximity to the A69 motorway, to the North of the town (Figure 10.33). Both are significant in terms of their location removed from the centre, they are also different in the approach to design which is used. The

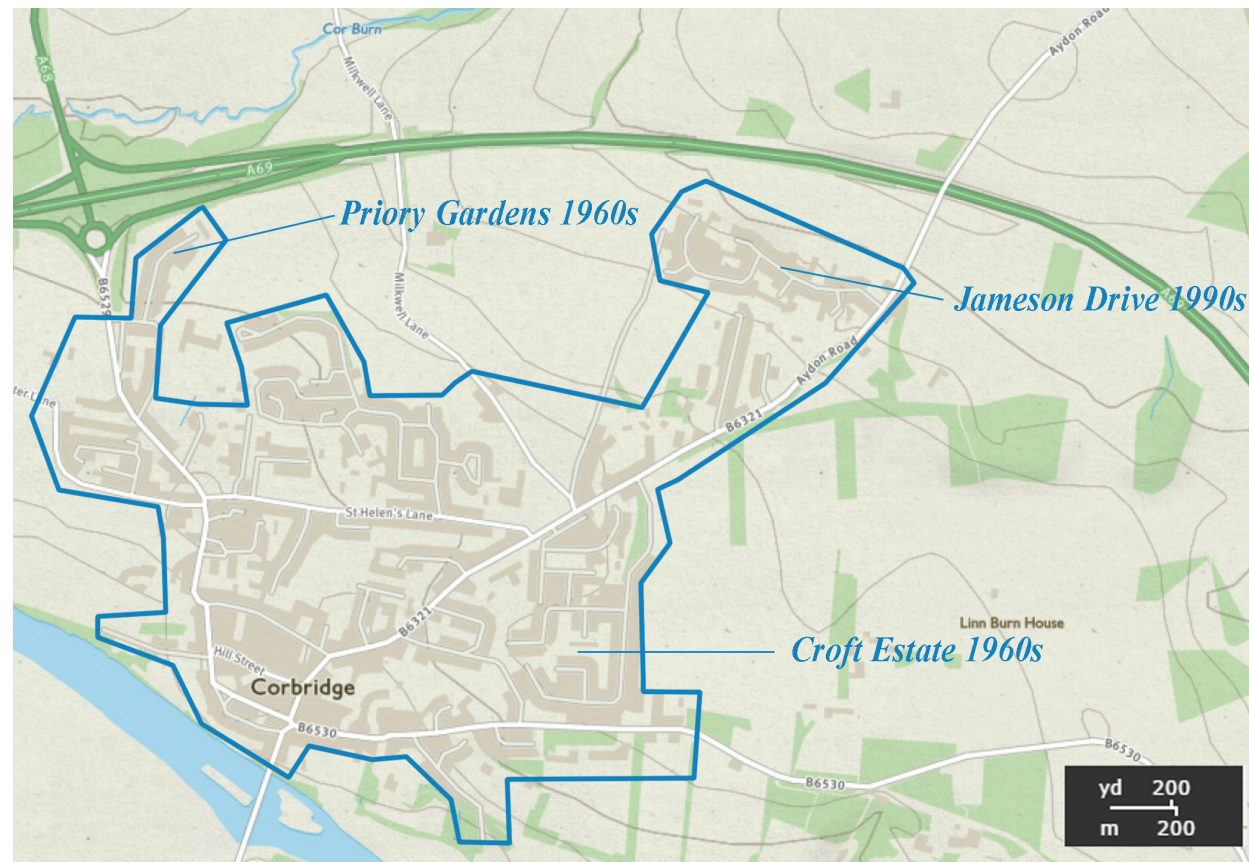


Figure 10.33: Location of late 20<sup>th</sup> Century development and its extents. Priory Gardens to the west and Jameson Drive to the east representing the current extents of development.

first is a 1960s development of semi-detached bungalows to the North West of the town on Priory Gardens. It is a cul-de-sac development located close to the Corbridge junction of the A69, comprising of 22 properties. The other significant development is Jameson Drive which is located to the North East and in close proximity to the A69, it was completed

in 1997. The development is a mixture of detached bungalows and houses, numbering 74 properties. Development in this period clearly exceeds the size of earlier developments. The design of all the properties can be seen as universal as opposed to more localised responses found in earlier development.

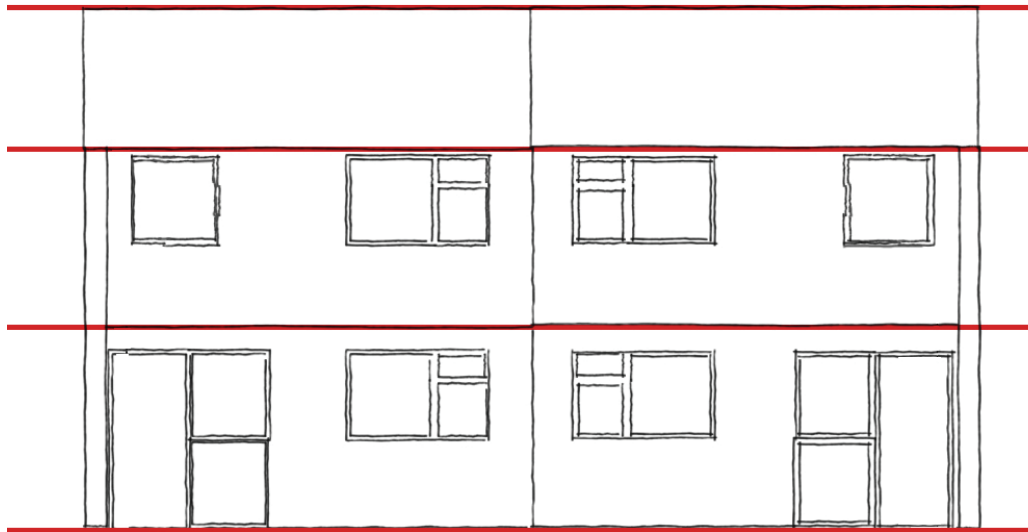


Figure 10.34: Housing on Glebelands is typical of the form of properties in the 1960s, whilst there are variations in form found in other schemes, the wall to roof ratio is the same.

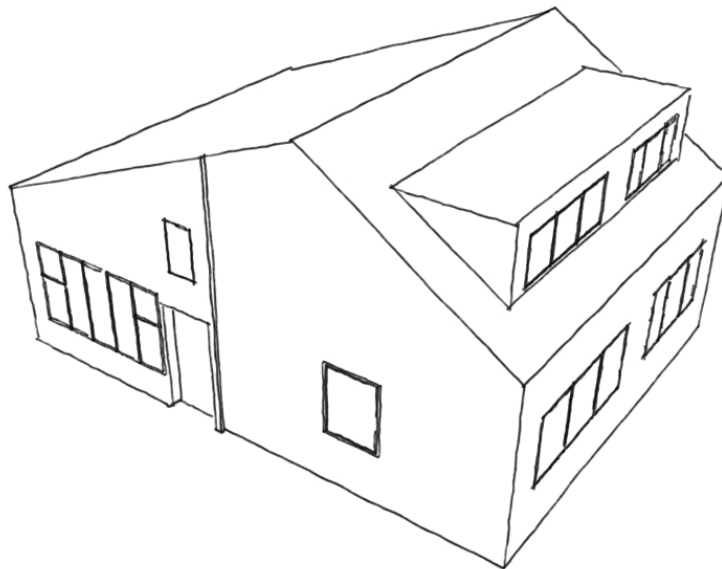


Figure 10.35: The salt-box configuration of properties on Priory Gardens, a design approach not seen in Corbridge historically.

## Form

Development in the 1960s, follows similar form to earlier development, with straight elevations and pitched roofs. The two storey properties have a wall to roof ratio of 2:0.8, with bungalows having and approximate ratio of 1:1 (Figure 10.34). There are few examples of single storey properties in Corbridge, so the development of bungalows in this period is disproportionate by comparison. The bungalows found in the Croft Estate, are very similar in design to the housing in the scheme, but feature L return roofs.

The departure in form in this period are the bungalows on Priory Gardens. They are semi-detached and feature salt-box roofs (Figure 10.35). An American term and possible design, whereby one pitch is longer than the other with eaves terminating at the same height on either side. The shorter pitch is presented to the street, with the longer pitch to the rear of the property, a design approach with no real precedent in the town. It is difficult to establish if the rectangular dormers on some of the properties, are a later addition to this form; as they appear on the front or rear of some of the properties.



The biggest departure in form, are houses in the Jameson Drive development. The ratios of wall to roof for the houses are still 2:1 and Bungalows 1:1. It is the overall form of the houses in the scheme, which are an amalgamation of different types. The development contains, pitched roofs, intersecting and overlaid roofs, cross hipped roofs, cross gabled roofs, hip and valley roofs and in the bungalows L-return's. All of which are of a complexity not present in older examples of architecture in Corbridge. Projected gables further alter the form, using standard and offset gables with one short pitch and one long pitch; all contribute to a myriad of different forms in one scheme (Figure 10.36).

### *Scale*

As with development in the 1930s, the scale is very similar to earlier development. It is the apparent scale which has changed particularly in development from the 1960s. As with 30s development there is an emphasis on the horizontal, with the use of large rectangular window casements (Figure 10.37). Development in Jameson Drive is similar, but mixes rectangular and vertical openings in many properties, which has a similar effect



Figure 10.36: An example of one of the properties on Jameson Drive, demonstrating the complex and convoluted approach to form.



Figure 10.37: Diagram of the emphasis of openings in late 20<sup>th</sup> Century development, in comparison to earlier development.





Figure 10.38: Horizontal emphasis and uniformity of the facade contribute to a lack of legibility. The only reveal on this property is the doorway.

on the perceived scale of the properties. The use of bungalows in these schemes, is also a departure from the established scale of much of the town. There are two single storey houses in the centre, but the quantity in these schemes is not reflective of the precedent.

### *Proportion*

Changes in the specification of houses in the post-war period, make the observation of proportion more difficult (Figure 10.38). The use of large infill panels, rendered or finished with hung tiles and the increase in size of window casements contributes to a lack of legibility. Older houses constructed in brick, or stone have more legible references to proportion. The proportion of brick, dressed stonework and quoins to some form of proportional system assisted in unifying a building in terms of proportion. Openings corresponded with the proportions of the materials used, making proportional relationships between elements easier to define. In older properties the openings could easily be compared with one another and the overall composition of the façade. Larger rectangular openings clearly correspond with a proportional system, but unlike older examples do not



express the component parts reflecting the multiplication of the proportional system into a cohesive whole. The lack of clearly definable bays and articulation of elements on the façade contribute to a lack of legibility.

Examining the development on Jameson Drive is complex, this is due to the variety of forms and façade treatments used in the scheme. Houses in the scheme typically use four or five different types of window opening, in one façade treatment. Whilst linked to the internal function of the property, their placement on the façade in some cases seems arbitrary. Individual elements such as projected gables, are easier to read in isolation and often show some form of reference to a proportional system. It is in the overall composition of many of the façades that legibility is lost. The placement of openings; dormer and details combined with the variations in form that contribute to this. Individual elements read as conforming to a proportional system, but their relationship to the whole fails to complete the composition. Detailing in the scheme references older development, but the proportion of elements used differs from the older properties they reference. Windows are visibly different, in shape



Figure 10.39: Variation in detail, ornament and material on properties on Jameson Drive, referencing many different styles and periods.

and proportion; so lintels, hood mouldings and sills reflect this. The quoins used on properties also seem to be smaller in comparison to historic examples, possibly due to the use of metric rather than imperial building components (Figure 10.39).

### *Rhythm*

The houses developed in the 1960s are all split into two equal bays; semi-detached properties have the doorways positioned on the outside bays; with the windows serving the living spaces occupying

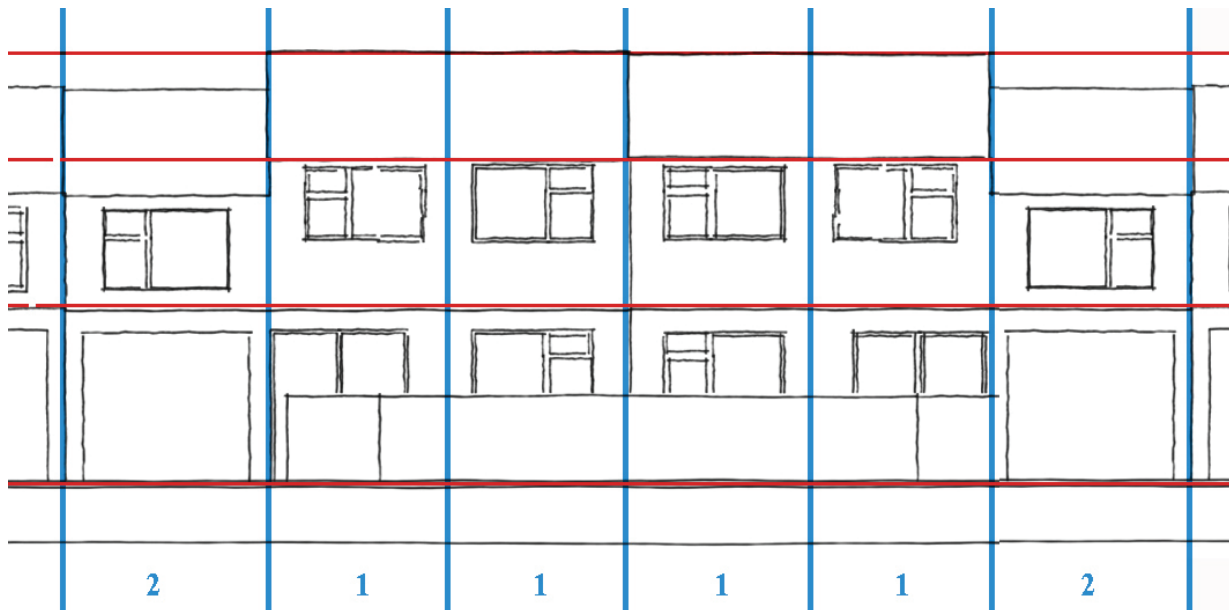


Figure 10.40: The rhythm of bays on the housing in Croft Estate, with two equal bays for the house and a broader bay for the garage.



Figure 10.41: A majority of the properties on Jameson Drive, can be split into 3 bays with the inclusion of garages increasing the number of bays. It is the placement of elements in the bays which makes their legibility difficult.

the inner bays. This is similar to semi-detached development in the 1930s. Terraced properties also mirror this pattern, with vertically aligned windows and doors. The exception of this are the houses in the Croft Estate which have an additional bay for a garage. The rhythm of the bays reads, garage-door-window-window-door-garage (Figure 10.40). The bungalows in this period are generally split into four bays, with two narrow central bays which contain the door and a small window and two broad outer bays which have larger windows which relate to the living spaces.

Examining development on Jameson Drive is more complex, each property is detached and the design approach has sought to produce individuality in each house. There are several variations of rhythm in this development with all houses split into 3 and 4 bays. Three bay properties are comprised of, medium-small-large, large-small-small, large-small-large, large-medium-large and three equal bays (Figure 10.41). Houses designed with 4 bays all accommodate a garage and are all arranged, broad-narrow-medium-medium. It is the placement of openings and the variation of size in the bays, that effects the overall rhythm of the façades.



It is the misalignment of many elements which contributes to incoherent rhythms in these properties. The bungalows in the development are all of the same type and L plan. Façades facing the road are split over two bays, wide-narrow, with 3 equally sized bays which contain the front door and two garage doors. The development on Jameson Drive, perhaps strays furthest from the historic design and composition of houses in Corbridge.

#### *Material, Construction and Detail*

The development of the 1960s all use cross-wall construction, gables are produced in brick, with a timber frame used to span the gables. The façades are then weatherproofed with hung tiles or rendered panels, reducing construction time and material cost (Figure 10.42). The brick used in The Croft Estate is tan, roughly reflecting the colour of the stonework in the town, with infill panels on the façades finished in a sand coloured render (Chudley & Greeno 2016). The roofs of this development use some form of standardised material, in a slate configuration. Its colour and uniformity, are unlike slate used in earlier development and are brown rather than blue grey. These approaches to materiality are mirrored in



Figure 10.42: Cross-wall construction found in many of the developments in the 1960s, in this instance the facade is treated with pebble-dash render.



Figure 10.43: Stone cladding which is a feature on some of the properties in the Croft Estate.





Figure 10.44: An example of the mixed use of material and detailing on Jameson Drive.



Figure 10.45: The use of stone cladding on the whole building, masks its construction.

the construction of the bungalows in the scheme. Some properties feature stone cladding, but it is difficult to discern if this was part of the detailing of the original scheme or a later addition (Figure 10.43). The houses on Glebelands are of similar construction but feature green and brown hung tile infill panels and use a darker sand coloured brick. The benefits of this construction in combination with larger glazing units are in material costs and labour. Window casements are flush with the external surface, leaving no reveal. The materiality and detailing of these properties does little to reference the older properties in the town, other than to approximate the colour of the buff sandstone.

Development in Jameson Drive uses several approaches to the material finish. The main materials used are red brickwork, stone cladding and white render (Figure 10.44). The materials are used individually or in combination in the scheme, with some houses featuring a mixture of all three. A majority of the properties opt for either brickwork or stonework. The use of brickwork in the scheme provides some legibility of construction. In contrast stone cladding it is applied to all surfaces in this scheme, which differs from its use in 19<sup>th</sup>

Century development. The uniformity and arrangement of stone cladding, masks the actual means of construction (Figure 10.45 previous page). It is used to imitate regular and irregular stonework. The regular stonework is set in a pattern which reflects traditional approaches to construction. The irregular stonework is comprised of three sizes of standardised cladding arranged to give the impression of irregular stonework. The roofs are finished in brown pantiles or imitation slate. The materials used in the scheme are mostly imitation materials representative of older materials, but due to their composition and manufacture, approximate rather than replicate. This is also reflected in details such as, hood mouldings, quoins and lintels. In combination with the form and design of these properties, there is a sense that they are an assemblage of different aspects of design from all periods of Corbridge's development.

## 10.6 Conclusion

Examining the development of architecture in Corbridge, has drawn parallels with the research undertaken in the theoretical framework. The historic architecture examined has shown the use of localised materiality, but also

localised interpretations of what can be termed *national styles*. Increased connectivity through rail transport and the development of the road network resulted in the adoption of materials such as brick and slate. Periods of residential development in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, correspond with national building trends, as do periods of inactivity (Barras 2009). Changes in house design prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century are gradual, much of the established aspects of form and scale are retained from the earliest existing development found in the town. Changes to materiality and detail do occur, which add a greater degree of formality and regularity in terms of proportion. The use of brick and machined elements contribute to this, but for the most part much of the development in this period is comparable with earlier development in terms of scale and form. The use of brick in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century was representing a move away from the established materiality of the town. However, attempts were made to reference historic buildings in the town and reflect the established materiality, with the use of natural stone clad façades.

The influence of Monksholme on subsequent development is significant, particularly from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century onwards.

Reference to its projected gables and hood mouldings can be found in developments into the present. Significant changes occur in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, changes in form and groupings in the 1930s introduce approaches to housing design which are distinct from earlier approaches to design. The introduction of hipped and gambrel roofs and the dominance of semi-detached housing have little precedent in the town. There is little evidence of development in this period taking into account established approaches to design and materiality, instead it is representative of national approaches to design. Developments in the 1960s follows a similar pattern, which pays lip service through the colour of materials to the existing architecture in the town. Whilst development in the 1990s shows some notion of continuity, the groupings and use of imitation materials and building elements contribute to a sense of pastiche. The design of the properties on Jameson Drive also demonstrates a lack of understanding or engagement with the historic design in the town. It mixes and misplaces elements to manufacture a sense of the past. What has been established is that the most significant shifts away from localised architecture responses occur in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Whilst 19<sup>th</sup> Century architecture can be seen as the period in



which more universal approaches are taken in material and construction, the design and proportion of houses in this period is more closely linked to earlier architectural approaches.

As development has occurred in Corbridge, it has expanded beyond the centre of the town. A pattern emerges, with new development referencing the historic architecture to a lesser extent; the farther away from the centre it occurs. One of the most significant recent developments in the town is The Chains, designed and developed at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in close proximity to the historic centre. Its proximity to the centre and use of what was public space, meant that a greater level of scrutiny by planners and the local community was placed on it. Much of the development reviewed preceded the use of design guidance. The Chains is unique in terms of its location and the level of scrutiny the scheme would be under. This prompted a more considered response to the historic core of the town and a want to create a scheme, which was sympathetic to the historic centre. For these reasons it is important to examine this scheme in detail, to examine contemporary approaches to development and context.

## *11.0 Housing Development Analysis Corbridge*

## 11.0 Development Analysis

### 11.1 Introduction

In order to establish a coherent understanding of development in market towns, four schemes will be examined. The first will be, The Chains in Corbridge; this will relate to, 9.0 Historic Development and 10.0 Corbridge Analysis. In order to establish a wider understanding of the design strategies used in market towns by developers, a comparative analysis of a further three schemes will be undertaken. These are; Pottergate, Alnwick, High Gate, Durham and Acorn Square, Prudhoe (Figure 11.1).

A survey will be conducted in all four schemes with home owners, to establish their motivations for buying a property in these developments. This aspect of the investigation will be further developed, with a series of interviews with professions associated with this type of development. The participants will be from the following professions; architects, planners and developers. The aim of these studies is to develop a holistic understanding of the processes by which such schemes are developed and their function and responses to the user and the local environment.

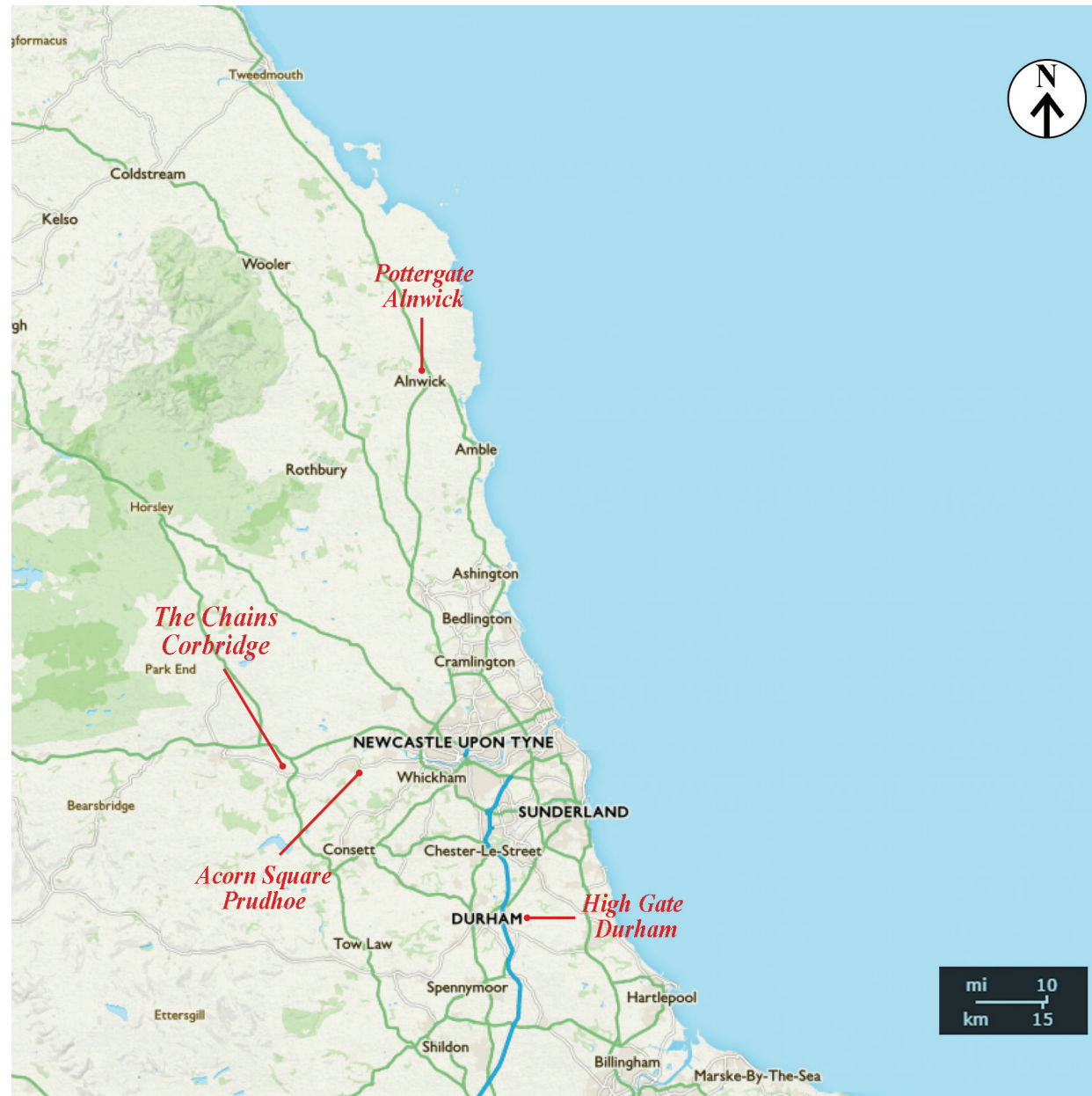


Figure 11.1: Map showing the locations of the housing schemes analysed in this section (Ordnance Survey 2015).



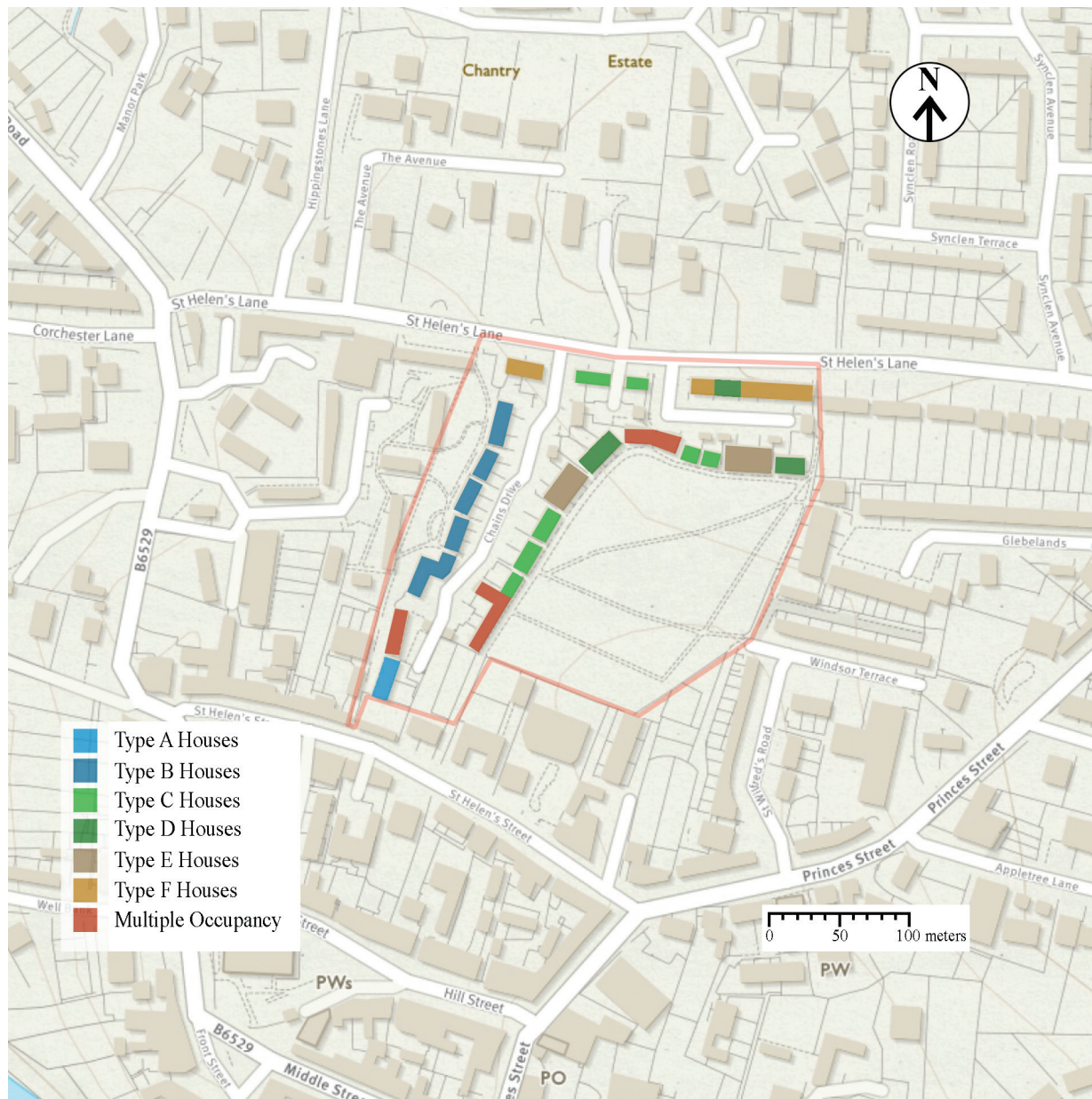


Figure 11.2: Map showing The Chains Development, with different housing types highlighted in the key. The town centre is to the South of the site, with vehicle access to the North via St Helens Lane (Ordnance Survey 2015).

The Chains is the only contemporary large scale development in Corbridge. It is located on a site which covers approximately 3.8 acres and was developed on what was allotment space gifted by the Duke of Northumberland in the 19th Century. It comprises of 71 dwellings, 52 private and 19 rented under the control of Northumberland County Council.

There was a requirement for any development taking place, to retain much of this open land for public use and access (Figure 11.2). Initial design and development was carried out by Jane Darbyshire & David Kendal Architects on behalf of the Duke of Northumberland Estates. Jane Darbyshire worked personally on the scheme undertaking much of the research and development work.

In an attempt to lessen the physical and visual impact of a new residential development, in such close proximity to the historic centre. In 2002, the development was handed over to Charles Church to complete. Which is significant as it passed from being an architect led development, to a developer led development; the implications of which will be discussed.



## 11.2 Composition

The housing in this development is located to the North and West of the site, in an L configuration. It is comprised of terraced, semi-detached and detached houses. The development also incorporates higher density multiple - occupancy blocks, which mirror the design of large detached properties (Figure 11.3).



Figure 11.3: Multiple occupancy property, modelled on Monksholme.

Terraces are grouped in rows of between three and four properties, which in comparison to the town centre is small. They are arranged with a gap between each grouping, which provides pedestrian access (Figure: 11.4). The housing which faces the green is aligned and includes detached and semi-detached properties (Figure: 11.5). Larger properties which open out onto St Helens Road, are arranged as a terrace, but give the impression of



Figure 11.4: Type A & B terraced house groupings.



Figure 11.5: Alignment of properties facing the green, with changes in ridge height reflecting the incline.



individual properties, each is arranged in a group of four. Terraced houses to the West of the scheme are stepped back after the first two groupings of four.

The Chains differs from the established pattern of development in the centre. Its use of the Radburn model, this was cited by JDDK Architects as being inspired by historic infill activity and land use. However, its primary function is vehicular access and parking. Which is not reflective of the function of the plots behind historic in the town. This approach represents a move away from the traditional pattern of development along established routes in the town; as a result, it is similar to development in the Croft Estate. The decision to use this model, was also influenced by the need to divert traffic away from the town centre. It is in the adoption of the Radburn model of development, which The Chains strays furthest away from established development patterns. Routing pedestrians along what are intended to be the fronts of the properties and vehicle traffic to the rear of the properties (Figure 11.6).

The footpaths associated with the development have no precedent in development prior to the 1960s. Grass



Figure 11.6: Garages, car ports and open parking to the rear of the development.

verges separate the path from the smaller Type A & B terraced properties. The houses which face the green open directly onto the path. Many of the paths intended to serve the development are used as pedestrian routes, linking the North and South of the town. As part of the planning conditions a large area of green space was preserved at the centre of the scheme. Rather than being an open playing field, it is bisected diagonally by a pathway, creating two triangular tracts of land. This limits its use for sport or recreation. The properties which face the green, lack a definition of ownership

of this space, which may contribute to a reluctance to make use of it. It is a public space, however its proximity to the development is suggestive of it belonging to the scheme. The lack of delineation between public and private contributes to the confused purpose of this open space (Figure 11.7).

Vehicle access and parking is located to the rear of the properties, which has resulted in an increase in the use of this space by residents. Making the rear



Figure 11.7: Small front gardens, without walls or fences to define ownership and boundary.



of the properties the primary access point for many residents. There is little to differentiate between vehicle and pedestrian, with no change in surface materials or markings. There are three parking solutions, shared car ports, standalone garages and open parking. As with other developments that have employed this model, reliance on the car for commuting and transport encourages greater use of the rear of the properties, at the expense of the pedestrianised areas to the front (Figure 11.8). The scheme is too recent to show many signs of habitation and amendment, as seen earlier development. The design does incorporate design features which attempt to mirror



Figure 11.8: Parking solutions at the rear of the development.

these changes. To the rear of the properties there is an intentional misalignment of the openings. This is influenced by changes to the positioning of openings in historic properties, in this instance it is a manufactured design element. Changes in ridge height and the mixing of forms are also used to engender a sense of historic development. This will be discussed in greater detail in the analysis section.

### 11.3 Housing Overview

There are six primary housing types used in the scheme, all of which reference existing historic precedent in the town centre. Due to the number of house types, each will be analysed individually in terms of **form**, **scale**, **proportion** and **rhythm**. Terraced, semi-detached and detached properties in the scheme primarily draw influence from 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century houses in the centre. The buildings which deviate from this are the multiple occupancy properties, which mirror Monksholme and introduce projected gables to the front and rear. Whilst the multiple occupancy buildings mirror Monksholme, a terraced group is used to form landmark building comprised of four Type D properties, which are unified by a central projected gable which references Cross House (Figure 11.9).



Figure 11.9: Group of 4 Type E properties, arranged to resemble Cross house.

There is an intentional mixing of forms in this scheme, but all to a greater or lesser extent share similarities with existing form in the town. All of the properties feature straight elevations and pitched roofs, with differentiation occurring in terms of height and width.

## 11.4 Housing Types

### *House Types A & B*

This house type is located to the west of the development and references 18th and 19th Century terraced housing, found in the town centre.

#### *Form*

Types A and B are similar in form to many smaller historic properties in the town (Figure 11.10). They feature pitched roofs which is the shallowest roof type found in the development. The roofs are more in keeping with earlier terraces (Figure 11.11). The proportion of wall to roof is 2:1. The façades of these properties are rectangular, with Type A being slightly narrower than Type B. The elevations of both types are straight, which is in keeping with earlier development. They occur in small self-contained terraces of three and four properties.

#### *Scale*

The scale of housing Types A & B, are largely in keeping with smaller two storey terraced properties in the centre of town. Many of the terraces that developed in the

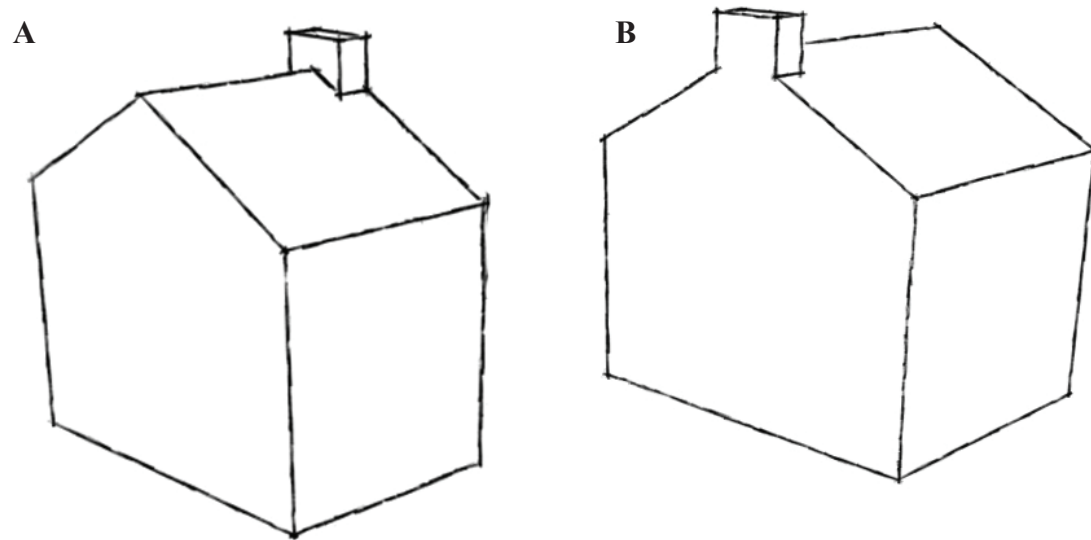


Figure 11.10: Form diagrams of Type A and Type B houses.



Figure 11.11: A comparison of terrace types, in relation to Type B properties.



centre are, of a similar scale and developed in relation to properties they are adjacent to. In comparison with the other properties in the scheme, Type A & B appear smaller. The scale of many of the properties in the development, is in reference higher status properties found in Corbridge. They mirror larger historic properties, the status of which are linked to size and grouping.

### *Proportion*

The overall proportion of type A, is similar to houses found in the town centre. The façade is approximately 1: 1.5 in width and height. Which is representative of a few small infill developments found in the centre. Façades tend to be broader in width, in relation to their height. This ratio is carried through to the window openings, which unlike their earlier counterparts the height is roughly one and a half times the width (Figure 11.12). Earlier sash windows correspond more closely with the golden section and were slightly taller in height. Type B properties are approximately the same in width as they are in height 1:1.2 (Figure 11.13). This is not commonly found in earlier houses. The use of standardised imitation sash windows is an attempt to emulate the properties which occur in the centre. These are found in



Figure 11.12: Type A & B properties demonstrating the shorter dimensions of the windows specified in the development and their relationship to the façade.



Figure 11.13: Relationship of the roof and façade and the proportions of the façades.





three types, the most traditional having an approximate width to height ratio of 1:1.4, slightly shorter than those found in the centre, which are 1:1.6. The scale of the openings differs, with the windows in this section of the scheme being shorter and thus appearing broader than those of Victorian or earlier developments. Jane Darbyshire & David Kendal Architects, stated that they originally specified deeper window openings.

The reveal and sill heights were reduced when Persimmon took control of the development. This contributes to a diminished sense of verticality, as the openings in earlier terraced properties in the town are taller. This is also reflective of manufactured proportions, with pre-manufactured building elements dictating the size of openings (Figure 11.14).

### *Rhythm*

The rhythm of the openings in these properties is similar to the rhythm of earlier properties. The placement of openings corresponds with historical examples found in the town. Types A and B are split into two bays, with a wide bay containing the openings which correspond with the living spaces and a narrow bay



Figure 11.14: Two row properties on Cross Street, which are the inspiration for Types A & B. Comparison of the two highlights difference in material and detailing is apparent in comparison.



containing the entrance. Type B properties differ, in that a window aligned vertically with the doorway, with two openings at ground floor level. Type A properties are arranged, narrow-broad-narrow-broad, with Type B properties arranged, broad-narrow-broad-narrow. This is similar in rhythm to buildings found in the centre of Corbridge.

### House Type C

The influence for this property type, is an individual property, Vine Cottage. Located on Main Street, it is the only property to feature this arrangement of openings with a narrow half width window above the door (Figure 11.15). Type C properties are located, overlooking the green (Figure 11.16). The general appearance of these houses is closely related to Victorian and Edwardian development in Corbridge. They are three storeys in height, with the top storey formed within the roof space. Referencing Victorian and Edwardian terraces, in particular those found on Stagshaw Road. They occur in groupings of detached and semi-detached properties.



Figure 11.15: Vine Cottage, Main Street is the influence for Type C properties, however it is noticeable that the proportions of the openings are different to those found in The Chains.



Figure 11.16: Relationship of the roof and facade is significantly different from the historic precedent for this housing type.



## Form

The most visually apparent feature of this property type is the roof. They are very steeply pitched in comparison to properties found in the scheme, as well as the historic properties they reference in the town. Roofs are orientated front to back, the height of the roof ridge to the eaves being almost equal to the height of the facade. The size and degree of pitch in conjunction with the height of the facade, has little precedent in Corbridge. The ratio of wall to roof is approximately 1.2:1, with near equal height to both elements (Figure 11.17).

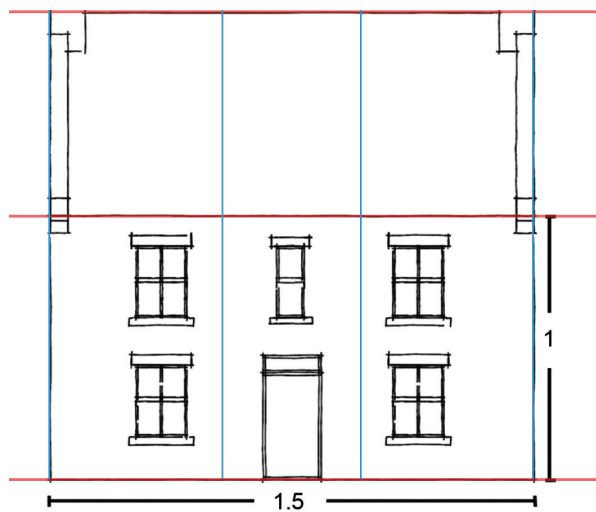


Figure 11.17: Relationship of the wall to roof and proportion of the facade.



Figure 11.18: The arrangement of dormer windows on the rear of the properties. There is little precedent for this specification and it may indicate the lack of definition between the front and rear of the properties.

Two dormer windows, are used to bring light into the roof space, they are evenly placed on the rear aspect of the roof (Figure 11.18). This is in contrast to the specification of dormer windows on Edwardian and Victorian properties where they are predominantly placed on the front elevation. The inclusion of dormer windows to the rear and the use of kneelers, effects the overall shape and form of these houses. The chimneys mirror earlier development and are located at each gable end, framing the building.

## Scale

The physical height of the roof from ridge to eaves in relation to the facade, has an effect on the apparent scale of the building, it serves to visually diminish the height of the building. Whereas older properties have the appearance of the roof being one third of the overall height of the building, visually the effect on these buildings is almost half facade, half roof. This serves to reduce the apparent overall scale of the building. This emphasises the horizontal, diminishing the buildings perceived height and is particularly noticeable in the semi-detached variant (Figure 11.19).



Figure 11.19: Relationship of the wall to roof and proportion of the facade.



## Proportion

The façades of these properties are roughly 1.5: 1 in width and height. This is similar to the proportion of façades used on similar sized double fronted housing in the centre. The legibility of the facade in this type, is skewed by the size of the roof. As with other properties in this development, the standardised windows which are used throughout the scheme, dictate the proportion of the window openings. Whilst the openings on the front facade of these properties are equal in size and proportion to other window openings in the scheme. The window specified in the central bay above the doorway is half the width of the standard windows. All of the double fronted historic properties bar Vine Cottage, maintain the same window size throughout the facade.

## Rhythm

The rhythm of the openings is similar to the those of earlier double fronted properties. The placement of openings corresponds with historical examples found in the town, with the window openings vertically aligned over three bays on the facade and the doorway placed centrally. In some historical instances

there is a window above the doorway on the central bay, this is generally the same size as the other window openings on the facade, maintaining the uniformity and rhythm of openings throughout. The rear of these properties seems to lack precedent. A mixture of window sizes is used, standard sized windows occupy the right-hand bay of the rear façade, with the remaining bays containing an arrangement of smaller windows and the back door offset at the edge of the left bay. This configuration is handed on the semi-detached properties and due to the mirroring of this arrangement, creates a slightly more unified visual appearance (Figure 11.20).

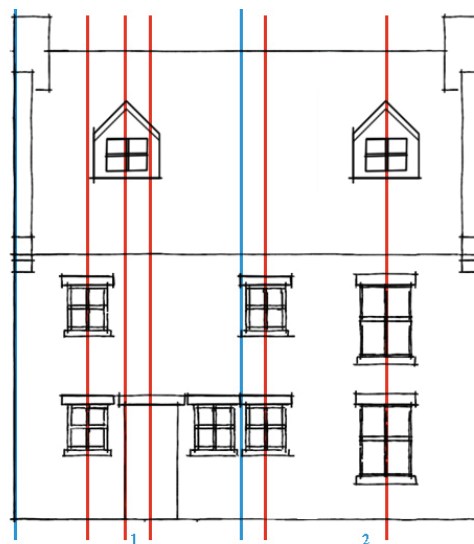


Figure 11.20: Rear elevation, the alignment of dormer windows in relation to the bays.



Figure 11.21: The handed facade treatment to the rear, is suggestive of it being a different building, especially given the placement of dormer windows on the elevation.

There is little precedent for the mixture of window sizes and their placement on the rear elevation. It appears to suggest the kind of treatment found on the front facade of a house and almost acknowledges the use of the rear of the properties as the primary entrance (Figure 11.21). This is further emphasised by the placement of dormer windows to the rear of the property, whilst the large sash windows and dormer are in alignment, the smaller windows towards the gable are out of alignment with the dormer. This is possibly enhanced due to the expectation to find dormer windows at the front of a property.

## House Type D

In design Type D properties are the closest housing type to 19<sup>th</sup> Century development, taking some inspiration from existing terraces in the immediate area of The Chains.

### *Form*

As with type C houses the roofs are steeply pitched, resulting in a similar relationship between facade and roof, the ratio is approximately 1.2:1. Visually the effect of this appears lessened, with the use of flat roofed dormer windows on the front elevation (Figure 11.22). The orientation of the roof pitch is front to back, with the addition of parapet gables, which occur at the gable ends of each property. Chimneys are located at each left hand gable. This along with the difference in height between each property defines these properties as being individual, despite being placed in a terrace.

### *Scale*

As with Type C, the physical height of the roof in relation to the facade, has an effect on the apparent scale of the building. It visually diminishes the height of the



Figure 11.22: Front elevation of Type D properties, which demonstrates the use of kneelers to articulate the roof and differentiate between properties. There is little precedent for flat roofed dormer in Corbridge.

façade. The inclusion of dormer windows to the front facade lessens this effect. Unlike Type C, the roofs are separated with the use of parapet gables and a

difference in ridge height between each property. This lessens the apparent scale of the roof in relation to the facade, unlike Type C which carries an unbroken roof.

## Proportion

The proportion of the facade of this type is approximately 1.2:1, corresponding with smaller C19 terraced properties. As with type C, it is the extent of the roof pitch which is unprecedented in the design of earlier properties. The proportion of the window openings in the facade are the same as other properties in the scheme, shorter and broader than those found in earlier properties. The use of dormer windows in this type contributes to a greater sense of verticality. Type C is positioned next to Type D in the scheme, highlighting the difference in vertical emphasis. This further emphasises the difference in proportion between the different housing types in the scheme (Figure 11.23).

## Rhythm

The rhythm of openings used on Type D properties, is similar to that of the terraced housing in Corbridge. Whilst both housing types carry openings over two bays, its 19<sup>th</sup> Century counterpart has the windows and door aligned vertically over two storeys. The primary defences are the positioning of openings towards the outside of the bays and the alignment

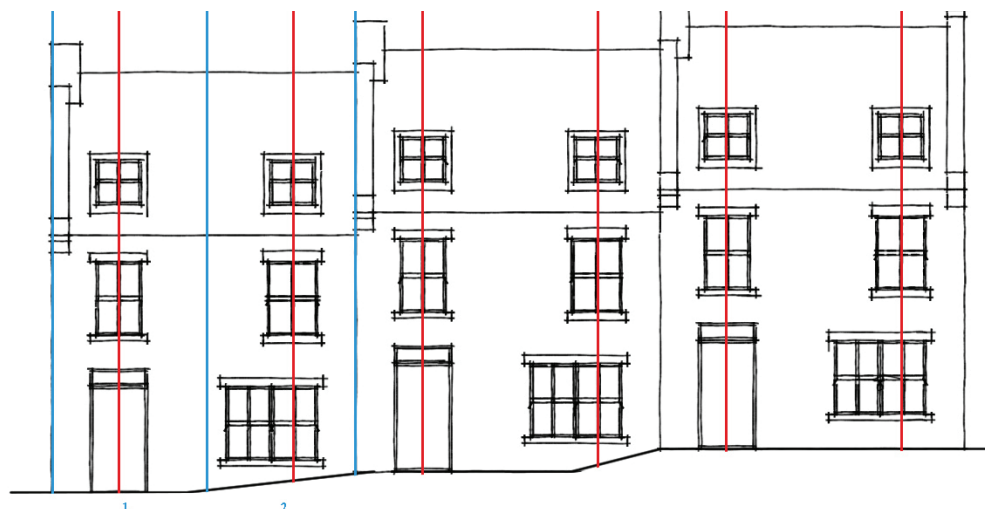


Figure 11.23: Front elevation of Type D properties, with square dormer windows in vertical alignment.

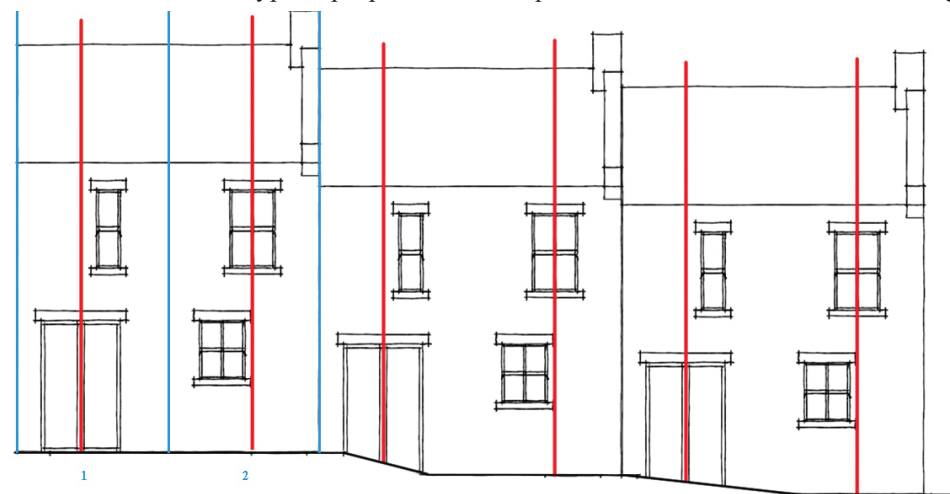


Figure 11.24: Front elevation of Type D properties, with square dormer windows in vertical alignment.

of double windows on the ground floor. Earlier examples are centrally aligned or feature double windows on both floors. The rear of these properties is identical to Type C, the organisation of the openings is comprised of two bays. In this instance

it is the left bay which carries the standard openings, with the smaller windows placed in the central and right-hand bays (Figure 11.24). As with Type C there is an intentional misalignment of the openings which emulates historic properties.





Figure 11.25: Type E properties appear tall due to the width of their facade in relation to its height.

## House Type E

Type E is a single fronted property type which is similar that is inspired by 18<sup>th</sup> Century houses found in the centre. There is no specific precedent for this housing type in Corbridge, however elements of this design are similar to 18<sup>th</sup> Century two and a half storey houses found adjacent to the market place. They are arranged in a group of four, overlooking the green to the west of the development.

### *Form*

The relationship between facade and roof is more in keeping with the historic architecture found in Corbridge. They have a wall to roof ratio of approximately 3: 1, giving them a taller, slender appearance in comparison with neighbouring Type C and D properties. The roof height is similar to Types A and B.

Unlike other housing types in this section of the development they do not feature parapet gables or kneelers, they do carry chimneys located at the left hand gable (Figure 11.25). These properties are three storeys in height and feature a projected two storey extension to the rear of the property, in the form of a catslide roof.

This contributes to a change in overall shape, differentiating this type from others in the scheme. The extension features the same dormer window style as Type C, however instances of dormer appearing on such projections have no precedent in the town. The Dormer windows to the front of the property are the same as Type D and feature flat roofs.

### *Scale*

Whilst Types D and E share the same roof height, the height of facade compensates for this. The apparent scale of the building in comparison to the other types in its proximity, gives it a greater vertical emphasis. However, in comparison to earlier buildings, it appears narrow and elongated.

### *Proportion*

The proportion of the facade of this is approximately 1:2, with the relationship of the wall to roof being 2:1 (Figure 11.26). The window openings are the same as those found in the rest of the development. It is the openings on the top floor being almost square roughly 1:1.2 and mirror the smaller half storey windows found on 18<sup>th</sup> Century houses.

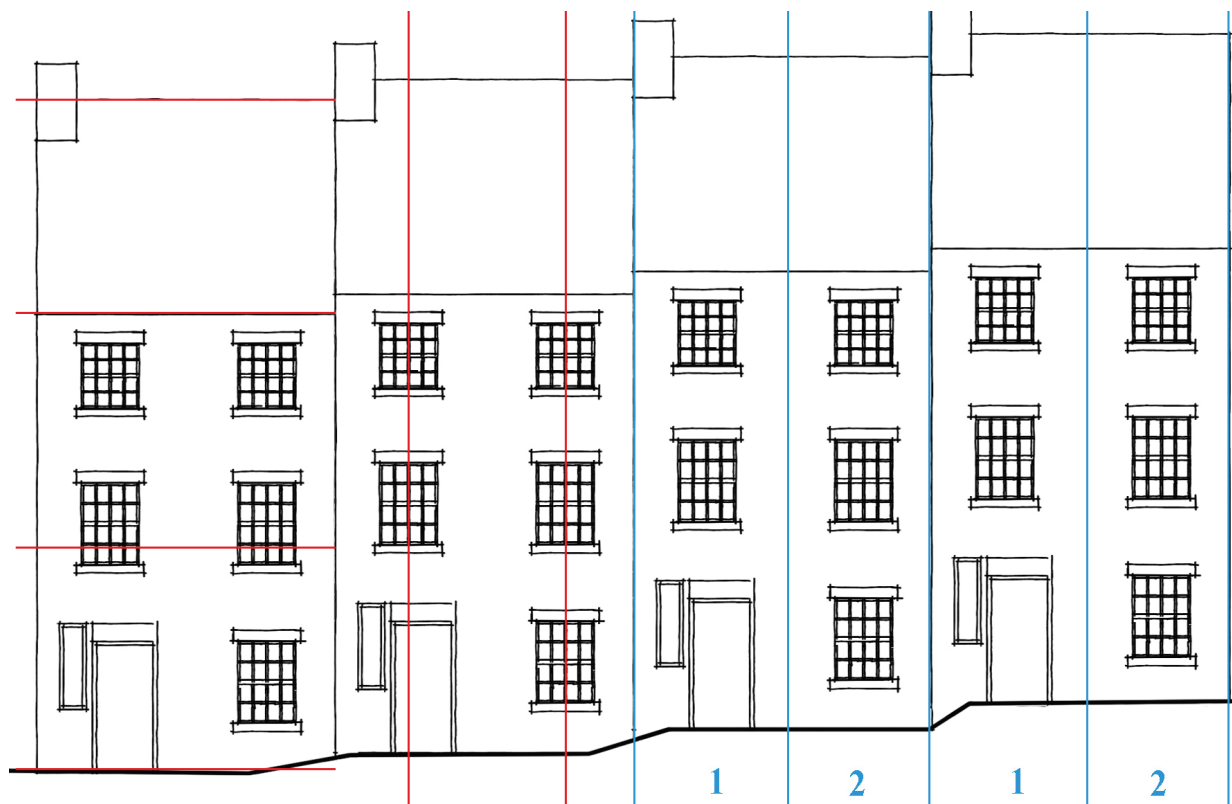


Figure 11.26: Proportion of facade to roof. Figure: 11.27 Alignment openings and door. Figure: 11.28 Rhythm of bays.

### *Rhythm*

The rhythm of the openings in this type is similar to those found in other single fronted properties. The door on the ground floor orientated to the left hand side of the property. Whilst the windows on the top floor are in alignment, the door is offset, breaking with this visual continuity (Figure 11.27). The placement of a narrow

window, two thirds the height of the door, contributes to the miss alignment of the door. In Victorian examples the door maintains alignment with the windows in the bay. The Rhythm is of two equally proportioned bays (Figure 11.28), The first bay houses the entrance and openings to the storeys above, with the second bay containing openings over three storeys. The projected extension to the rear of



the property, effectively transforms the facade into two bays, a wide bay and a narrow bay (Figure 11.29). The extension has vertically aligned windows, dormer followed by sash then patio doors on the ground floor. The second bay features two narrow windows in vertical alignment on the first and second floors, followed by a small rectangular window on the ground floor which is out of alignment, again hinting at historic amendment.

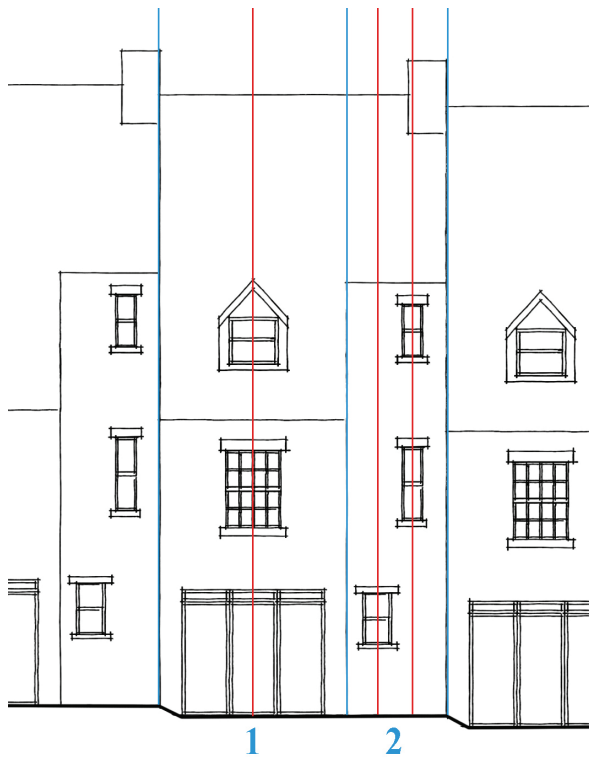


Figure 11.29: Change of rhythm to rear of Type E property, to wide-narrow; with misaligned window on ground floor.



Figure: 11.30 Double fronted mid 18th Century house on Cross Street, which Type F properties mirror.

### House Type F

This housing type is found in a detached variant to the north of the scheme and is also incorporated into the large terrace on St Helens Lane. It is very similar to Type E, however the front facade is carried over three bays. It closely resembles double fronted properties on Cross Street, which date from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century (Figure 11.30). It is the largest house type in the scheme and is also the only type to be configured with garages in two instances. The placement of two of these properties on St Helens Lane, signifies the vehicle entrance to the scheme, which is accessed between them, with one house either side of the entrance.

### Form

This housing type is essentially a double fronted version of Type E, it omits the projected extension to the rear. Instead incorporating a single bay, two storey extension to the side. This is designed to incorporate it into a terraced grouping with varying ridge heights. The roof is shallower pitch and is amended with the addition of parapet gables and kneelers. With the chimney is orientated depending on the handing of the property (Figure 11.31).



Figure 11.31: The form of Type F properties, is designed to merge with adjoining properties, in a similar manner to the historic three storey houses found at the end of terraces in the centre.



## Scale

As with Type D, the proportion of the facade in relation to the height of the roof is approximately 2:1. This contributes to a sense that the proportions of these properties are far closer to those found in historic examples. The adjoining extensions are also of a similar scale to smaller residential properties in the centre.

## Proportion

The proportion of the facade in terms of width and height, is approximately 1:1.2, which is similar to smaller terraced housing types. The window openings as with those on other properties in the development are roughly 1:1.4, with the openings on the top floor being almost square roughly 1:1.2. To the rear of the building the facade is punctuated by a variety of openings, mixing 1:1.2 and 1:1.4 size openings with narrower 1:2 openings.

## Rhythm

The rhythm of the front facade of these properties is maintained over three bays, whereas the single fronted version offsets the door to accommodate a small window.

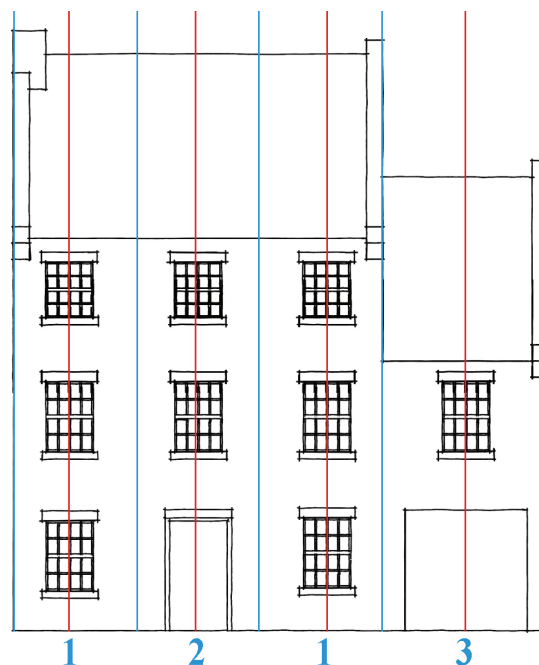


Figure 11.32: Front facade is reflective of earlier development, with symmetrical bays.

This design aligns the openings and door centrally in the middle bay (Figure 11.32). The rear of these properties which contributes most to a move away from a repeated rhythm, towards a less well conceived pattern of window placement. There is an indication visually that the arrangement of the openings to the rear of this property is making reference to historic amendment (Figure 11.33). The windows and openings are aligned on the gable bay of these properties, the other bays receive a mixture of narrow

rectangular windows along with a square window at ground floor level. It is the placement of two rectangular windows at different heights in the central bay which contributes to the disharmony of the rear elevation. Both are placed at the opposite extremities of the central bay. Whilst this may occur in older buildings there is often a legible reason for this which can be read externally by observing the openings which have been filled in. In this instance it is manufactured and breaks the rhythm of the facade with no clear motive or intention.

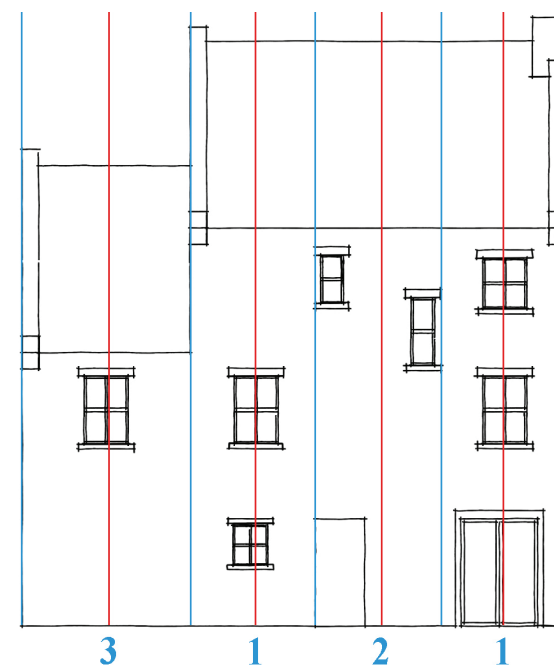


Figure 11.33: Rear elevation demonstrating offset window placement in central bay.

## 11.5 Material, Construction & Detail

The initial design for The Chains, sought to reflect the form and materiality of historic buildings in Corbridge. A high quality of specification, was seen as key to the success of the project. Jane Darbyshire & David Kendal, developed the plans in conjunction with the local planning authority and specified the use of natural materials throughout the scheme. This intention did not make it through to the built stage, as the land and the plans were sold on to Persimmon in 2001. Having taken control of the project material and detail specification was changed. The specification of artificial stone cladding instead of natural stone changed the material relationship with existing buildings in Corbridge. Other changes in material specification included the use of concrete quoins and lintels throughout the development, which have been painted to match the colour of the stone cladding. This is mirrored in other stone elements such as capping stones and finials. Some of the concrete elements have not received this treatment leaving them (Figure 11.34).

The stonework is arranged in regular bands adhered to the façades, arranged from the bottom up there is a decrease in the depth



Figure 11.34: Concrete blocks used in imitation of traditional stone work.

of each course. The first coarse is 400mm deep, followed by a 200mm coarse and a 80mm coarse (Figure 11.35). This is repeated to the height of each facade, with a break in this sequence occurring where openings have been specified, resulting in a mix of cladding sizes to accommodate windows and doors. Irregularity is introduced in the width of the cladding resulting in horizontal uniformity and vertical irregularity.

Irregularity does occur in much of the stonework of the town with the use of dressed stone spoilias as well as less formalised irregular stone work. The pattern and finish of the stonework in The Chains development, has no precedent in the town. Stone work in Corbridge prior to

the 19<sup>th</sup> Century is comprised of formalised blocks, with flat cut faces. These are arranged in regular courses, with little variation in the depth of the stone work. Irregular stone work occurs in a variety of sizes and shapes and is assembled ad-hock, it often features more regular quoins supporting the corners of the buildings. What is not apparent is the structure of the buildings, whilst 19<sup>th</sup> Century terraces in the town used natural stone cladding, all other elevations were brick; revealing the construction. The use of cladding throughout the development obscures the means of construction, further reducing its legibility.

The Chains development differs in colour from traditional development in the town.



Figure 11.35: Example of the stone courses used throughout the scheme.

The cladding used is far paler than the buff sandstone used in the town. Due to its manufacture, it has a uniformity of colour and surface texture. The roofing material in the scheme is artificial slate and is used throughout development. It is uniform in patina and colour unlike natural slate. These approximations are also echoed in the detailing of the development. It seeks to emulate earlier housing, through the specification of elements which approximate the originals. The specification of products such as UPVC windows, black plastic guttering and ironmongery, along with flat steel clad doors further diminishes references to past development (Figure 11.36).

## 11.6 Conclusion

The Chains has attempted to respond to the surrounding built environment, with a greater degree of sensitivity than development in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Through an engagement with earlier housing forms in Corbridge, it has tried to manufacture a sense of belonging to the place. The mixture of elements and styles is drawn from architecture which spans 300 years, from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Unlike many developments which focus on a limited selection of housing types,



Figure 11.36: Specification of UPVC windows and downpipes.

The Chains development contains nine different designs two of which are multiple occupancy. In attempting to incorporate these styles, elements from different periods are found in individual designs. In attempting to maintain a sense of traditional architecture throughout the scheme, it becomes difficult to reflect the changing patterns of development that have occurred historically.

One of the most visually apparent aspects of the scheme is the mixing of forms and ridge heights, which seek to echo earlier

patterns of development. What is clear is that until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, development designed by an individual or group of architects occurred in much smaller densities. The effect of this meant that they were closer to traditional patterns of growth and infill. The apparent shifts in scale and the proportion of facade to roof, contribute to a less than cohesive whole. The constraints imposed by the use of manufactured elements, with a predetermined component size effects the proportions of the buildings. If they do not strictly follow the same proportional system, this produces a knock on effect throughout the scheme.

The use of material in the scheme is an attempt at emulating existing historic properties. This brings about the issue of cost constraints in such a project, the use of authentic materials becomes prohibitive. Natural materials have been substituted with modern manufactured materials, which inherently possess a more uniform shape and texture. The ability of these materials to weather in the same way adds to the problem of emulating past styles. It is their application, using standardised elements and minimising their processing on site, which makes it problematic to mirror traditional stonework.



The use of the Radburn model is at odds with the historic settlement pattern. Most of the housing in the town occurs on terraced streets and along thoroughfares. It serves to segregate access to the as it does not engage directly with established routes. Vehicle access is limited to St Helens Road, with the development encircling a space reserved for vehicle access and parking. This contributes to a specific need to access the development. The use of cars by many residents for work and leisure activities further places emphasis on the rear of the properties, in some cases this becomes the primary entrance to the properties. Pedestrian movement is less hindered, but it is directed away from the housing which reduces interaction. Combined with greater emphasis on the rear of the properties, the two issues limited integration between residents and the wider community.

Viewing the development as a whole, it highlights the difficulty in attempting to emulate historical development without directly copying it. It is the sum of parts, observations of historic architecture and detail which create the whole. So when aspects of historical development are omitted, ignored or misinterpreted this has a profound effect on the overall scheme.

In attempting to emulate buildings of the past, the constraints of the present contribute to the difficulty of such a task. A 1930s semi-detached property has none of these pressures, it is what it is. It can be found in similar forms throughout the country and is none specific to place in its materiality. Its form though derived from traditional architecture, has become ubiquitous. It therefore is absolved of the responsibility of responding to place. In copying the specifics of a place, there is then an expectation that it directly mirrors the elements which have been replicated.

The Chains is representative of a more focussed and informed approach to development, which is not found in volume building. It is representative of a section of the market amongst speculative developers, which seeks to promote quality and authenticity in its products, as highlighted in chapter 3.0. In order to establish how development responds to historic market towns, it is important to examine similar examples at a range of scales and relate them to the analysis of Corbridge and The Chains, to establish a wider understanding of architectural responses in historic market towns.

## 11.7 Survey of Residents The Chains

### 11.7.1 Introduction

Having examined market towns in the North East of England, there is a pattern to development that has been identified. Larger developments, produced in the main by volume housebuilders tend to be located at the edges of existing towns and are primarily comprised of individual houses. Locating larger developments on the edge of towns provides greater space. Developing new housing away from historic centres also lessens pressure from planning authorities and residents in terms of planning and design. Developments identified in more central locations, tend towards a mixture of multiple occupancy and individual houses. They are often smaller due to their physical location and the already established context in which they are set. They tend towards 20-35 houses for larger developments and 4-10 houses for smaller developments.

### 11.8 Objective

The purpose of this part of the study is to determine the factors that influenced the purchase of houses in four developments in different market towns in the North East

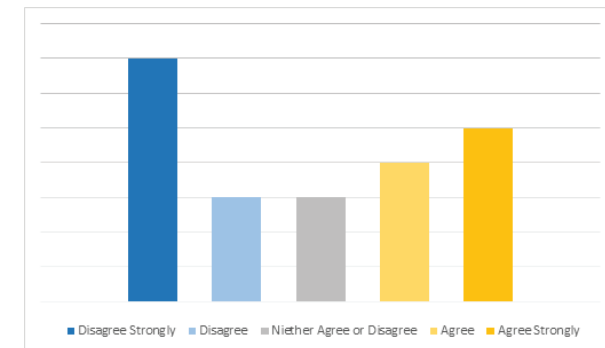
of England. Although it initially appeared that all residents are owner occupiers, it is not necessarily the case. Thus the focus of the data collection is on homeowners. The numbers are such that sampling was not appropriate. Therefore, the intent was to survey the vast majority of owner occupiers. It is the owner occupiers who are significant, as they purchased the properties based upon factors which are present in the surveys. Establishing the key criteria for the purchase of new houses in relation to their, appearance, amenity and location.

### 11.9 Surveys of Residents The Chains

There are a total of 71 dwellings in The Chains. It is a mixed development of owner occupiers, local authority tenants and private renters. There are 48 houses in the scheme, the breakdown of which is as follows; 31 properties are in private ownership, 17 are owned by Northumberland County Council and maintained by ISOS Housing Association. Of the 31 properties in private ownership surveyed, 2 were for sale and 4 were privately rented. The overall figure for owner occupied houses was 25, of which 22 responses were received from the residents.

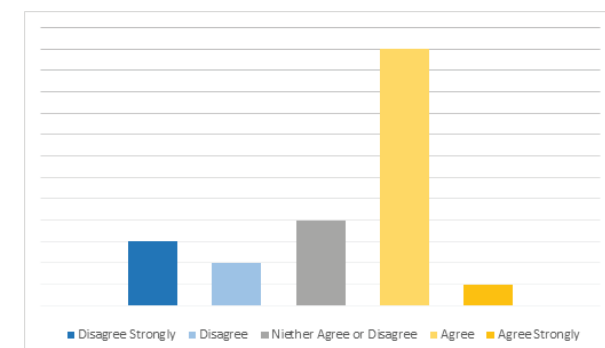
## Results

Question 1. *Was buying a new house, a key consideration when purchasing your home?*



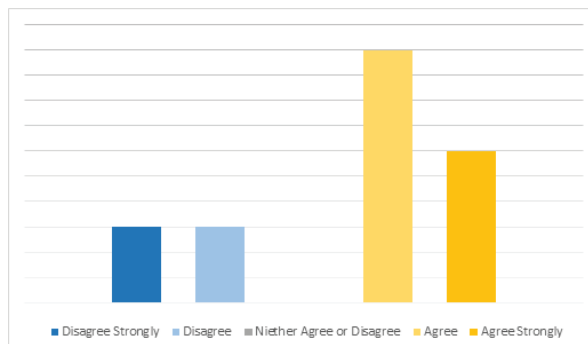
There was no clear pattern to the results. While the largest number of respondents stated that purchasing a new house was not a consideration, while there was a tendency towards new houses, older houses should not be discounted.

Question 2. *Did you consider buying a historic property?*



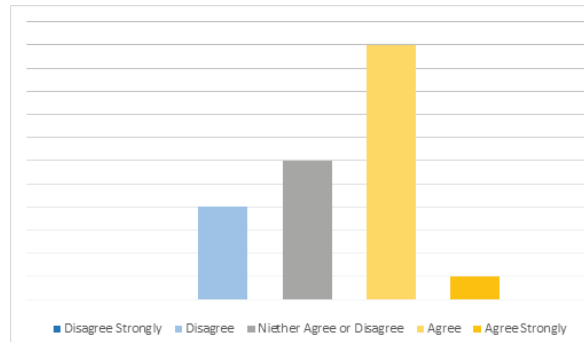
Interestingly, in the context of responses to the previous question, answers to this question show more interest in historic properties. At this stage, explanations can only be speculative. It may be that prospective purchasers first consider older houses, but for factors that may include space, gardens, provisions for cars, energy and other issues - new or newer houses offer more to satisfy their aspirations.

Question 3. *Was the location in a market town a primary factor in purchasing your house?*



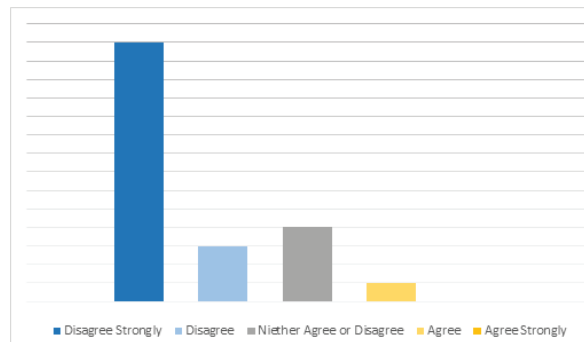
The results to this question suggests that location in a market town is very important to the purchaser. With a clearer preference stated for this than previous questions. In relation to previous responses, it is possible that the location is more important than the house its self.

Question 4. *Was the traditional appearance of the house an important consideration?*



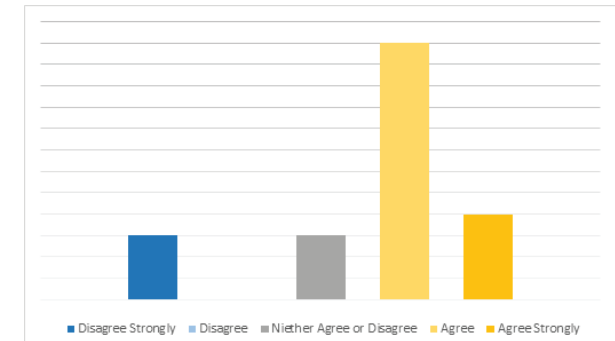
Regardless of whether the choice is for new, newer or older houses, a traditional appearance appears to be significant.

Question 5. *Was your input into the specification of the house a key consideration when buying it?*



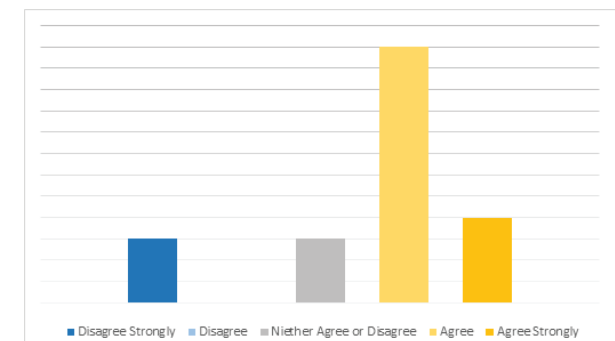
This result suggests that it is not important for prospective purchasers to tailor a house to their needs. However few residents had bought these properties from new.

Question 6. *Are the rooms in your house sufficiently sized?*



This was a strong result that stated residents are generally satisfied with the size of rooms.

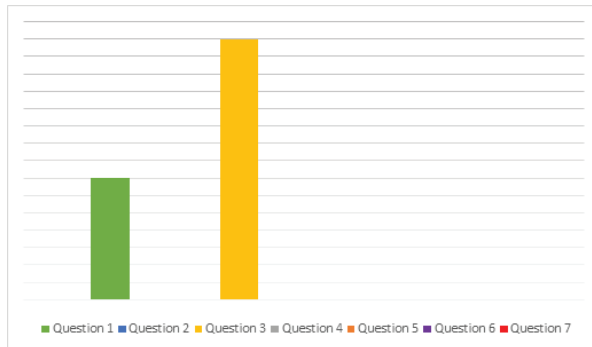
Question 7. *Was the provision of off road parking a significant factor in buying your house?*



As parking appears an important issue, it may migrate decisions about house purchase towards newer houses, where cars can be accommodated with greater ease than older properties.



Question 8. *Which of the above questions was most significant when deciding to purchase this house?*



The response to this question confirms that location in a market town is very important. It also supports the notion that the location may be more important than the house for prospective purchasers.

## Conclusions

The outcome of the results was that:

- location in a market town is very important
- traditional appearance appears to be significant
- off-road parking is a major factor
- residents are satisfied with the size of rooms
- prospective purchasers prefer historic houses
- buying a new house is not an objective
- purchase of newer houses becomes a

solution because historic houses do not satisfy a number of the above issues

Supply and demand were not surveyed but may be factors in purchase decisions, due to the lack of availability of historic houses.

## *11.10 Housing Development Analysis Durham*

## 11.10 Analysis of Highgate Durham

### 11.11 Introduction

Highgate is located on an embankment next to Durham railway station and is in close proximity to the town centre (Figure 12.37). Durham is a historic town made famous by its 11<sup>th</sup> Century Cathedral. The development in the town is largely 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century, with some earlier buildings located close to the historic market place. In the area of The Highgate development, a majority of the residential building is 19<sup>th</sup> Century and is contemporary to the development of the railway. Highgate received a number of awards and was used on the CABE website as an exemplar housing development. The development is comprised of 26 flats and 34 town houses, all of the properties were intended for private sale. Completed in 2004, Highgate was a collaboration between, AMEC, Bryant Homes and RPS Architects. Unfortunately, RPS Architects and Bryant Homes are no longer in operation. CABE (2007) describe the scheme as follows:

*The competition-winning scheme by AMEC, Bryant Homes and RPS Architects is exemplary for overcoming the difficulties of the site and exploiting its location, for the contribution it makes to the townscape of the whole city and its reinterpretation of traditional building forms, and for the quality of materials used and care taken with the design of details. In demonstrating a high degree of variety within an overall pattern it manages to achieve the qualities of a quarter which has evolved over a long time and which 'looks as if it has always been there'.*

Figure 12.37: Map showing Highgate Development highlighted in blue. The town centre is accessed east-bound along the A690, or via numerous pedestrian crossing points. (Ordnance Survey 2015).

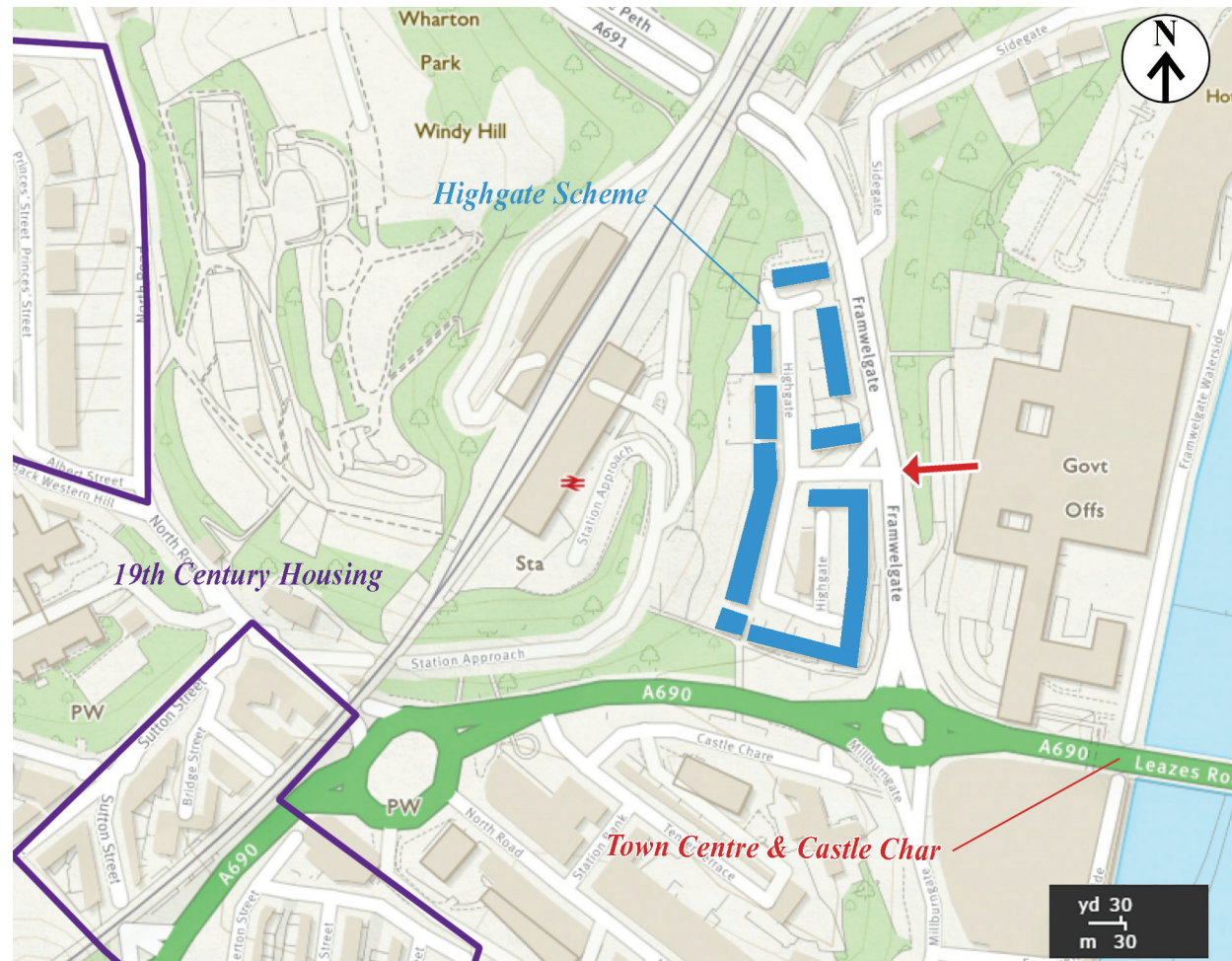






Figure 11.38: The earliest building in the vicinity of the development dating to the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> Century and clearly shows amendment with the addition of a 19<sup>th</sup> Century first floor bay window.



Figure 11.39: All of the terraces in this area follow a similar design, two storeys with a first floor bay window. Most follow the historic pattern of opening directly onto the street.

## 11.12 Composition

The Highgate development is located in a cul-de-sac, which is arranged in a T configuration; with one point of vehicle access from Framwell Gate. Parking in the scheme is accommodated to the rear of properties. Pedestrian access to the scheme is via Framwell Gate, the other entrance to the scheme serves Station Approach and the town centre via a purpose built bridge connecting the scheme Castle Char. The site is on two levels, with the terrace of houses to the North of the scheme built on an embankment on top of a retaining wall. The remaining housing is on the same datum as Framwell Gate. All of the properties in the development are terraced, with the smallest grouping comprising of four properties and the largest ten. None of the properties are detached.

## 11.13 Housing Overview

The housing is primarily influenced by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century architecture it is in close proximity to and was described as taking inspiration from the Georgian and Victorian architecture found in Durham (Figures 11.38 & 11.39). There are nine different house types specified by CABE (2007), yet examining the scheme it is





Figure 11.40: The arrangement of Type A and B properties, there is no clear rhythm to the composition of the terraces. This appears to suggest that much of the property is infill and the development like traditional architecture has grown over time. In examining infill development, much of it establishes rhythm with its self in the case of two or four properties. Individual properties tend to follow the existing rhythm and handing or are double fronted. It is the combination of materials and finishes which distinguishes this scheme and adds variety and colour.

clear that there are three primary house types, which are differently configured in terms of plan and detail. The housing types are mixed throughout the terraces in the scheme, alluding to different phases of building and amendment. The handing of properties and changes in the positioning of openings contribute to a sense of

variation in the scheme. Houses in the scheme are also stepped back or brought forward to add to a sense of traditional development. Slight differences in roof height also contribute to a sense of gradual development. This forms a strategy used throughout the scheme. The addition bay windows on the upper storeys of some

properties and the use of dormers, also contributes to the variation. The scheme includes multiple occupancy properties, which are identifiable as they are designed to look like infill development, it is these properties which have offset openings and other features which suggest that they may be old (Figure 11.40).



## 11.14 House Types

### Housing Type A

This housing type is mixed into the terraces, often flanked by taller properties to emphasise their height. It most closely resembles the terraced housing found in the proximity of the development.

### Form

It is similar to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century terraces in the area of the development. It has straight walls and a front to back pitched roof. The approximate wall to roof ratio is 2:1, two properties in the scheme have slightly taller walls to accommodate a third storey. In comparison with the standard type, the wall to roof ratio is approximately 2.3:1. The majority use dormer windows to achieve a third storey, both instances alter the shape of the building. All of the properties of this type, have a chimney located in line with the left gable, irrespective of handing (Figure 11.41).

### Scale

The scale of these properties is closest to the two storey terraced housing in Durham. It is also similar to 19<sup>th</sup> Century terraced development in other locations of analysis.



Figure 11.41: House Type A, split into two bays; with a notable distance between the larger openings and the gable.

### Proportion

The proportion of the façades on these properties varies in relation to the additional height added to incorporate a third storey. The standard type width to height is approximately 1:1.2, with the two properties featuring heightened façades having a ratio of 1:1.4 (Figure 11.42). The proportions of openings in this type are very close to their 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century counterparts. Unlike the

shorter modern sash windows found in the other developments analysed, their height is comparable with the originals. The window openings in the top storey retain a proportional relationship with their larger counterparts and are shorter by one quarter of the whole. The proportion of larger windows which serve the living spaces is less convincing. They are comprised of one central glazing panel that same size as the standard sash window used in the rest of the scheme.

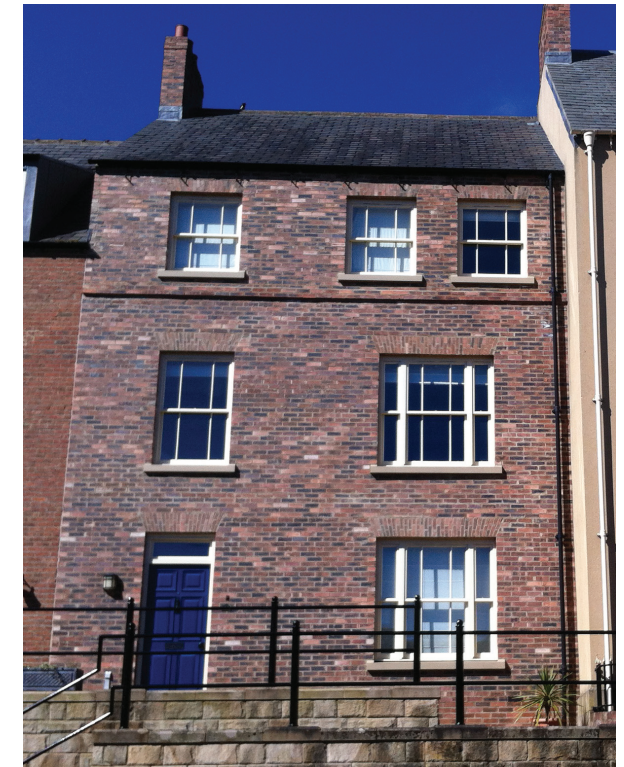


Figure 11.42: House Type A, with a half storey as opposed to dormer windows.



Either side of this are glazed sections of window which are one third the width of the sash. Proportionally in reference to itself, it works; related to the rest of the façade or historic precedent it does not appear correct. It is clear examining other property types that the same sized opening is used to accommodate bay windows, when referenced against historic buildings this would have been resolved with two separate sash windows, side by side.

### *Rhythm*

The rhythm of all of these properties is one wide bay, containing the windows which correspond with the living spaces and one narrow bay, which contains the door with a single sash window above. All of the elements are vertically aligned, including the dormer and paired windows which feature on some of these types. They read wide-narrow or narrow-wide throughout the scheme and are generally handed in the opposite direction to the building they are placed next to, wide-narrow-narrow-wide. The one anomaly, being an individual property which is closest in type to Type A, it is the white property in (Figure 11.37) which is double fronted. It has two wider bays on the outside and a narrow bay in the centre, the doorway in the centre bay

is offset to the right, which disrupts the overall composition of the terrace.



Figure 11.43: House Type B, the house on the right is representative of Type B properties, with the house on the left being an anomaly, visibly narrower, without the bay window openings.

### *Housing Type B*

This house type is very similar to A but is a full three storeys in height. It is more reflective of some of the houses/ shops found near the market square in the centre. It still uses the 2/3 window on the second floor but is visibly larger than the Type A variant (Figure 11.43).

### *Form*

The form of these properties is very close to that of Type A, with straight walls and pitched roofs. It is in the proportion of

the wall to roof that they differ with an approximate ratio of 2.5:1. There are two properties of this type in the scheme which are narrower by approximately 1200mm and have sash windows in both bays as opposed to the larger openings associated with the use of bay windows in the scheme. To the rear of these properties one of the bays is projected by approximately 1000mm.

### *Scale*

The scale of these properties, exceeds a majority of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century housing in the town and is closer in height to the buildings found near the market square (Figure 11.44).



Figure 11.44: 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century development Durham Market Square.





Figure 11.45: It is clear in comparison that the facade is more balanced with the placement of a bay window. The distance between the windows in both bays is more equal in the right hand property. They left hand property, well I don't know what they were thinking, its the only one.

### *Proportion*

The proportion of the façades on this type is approximately 1:1.6, close to the ratio of the golden section. The two narrower examples are approximately 1:1.8. As with Type A it is the placement and size of the larger openings which does not sit well in the composition. The use of bay windows clearly demonstrates that the larger

openings are intended for this purpose, with the addition of these windows the overall proportion of the façades, relative to the openings seems more balanced (Figure 11.45).

### *Rhythm*

A majority of these building types were clearly designed to have bay windows,

there omission on many leaves the placement of openings in the façade offset. With the inclusion of bay windows, the distance from the gable to the bay and on the opposite side the gable to the door and sash windows above is equal. This creates balance and symmetry in the façade, the omission of the bay window leaves the larger opening further away from the gable, resulting in an asymmetry. The overall effect of this makes the composition seem lopsided (Figure 11.46). The rhythm of these openings is identical to those of Type A, wide-narrow, narrow-wide.



Figure 11.46: Comparing the bays in this facade there is a clear emphasis to the left, with the right hand bay openings placed further away from the gable end.



## *Housing Type C*

There are examples of double fronted properties in Durham, those featured in this scheme bare little relation to. Looking at double fronted properties in the other locations surveyed, there is little evidence for this approach.

### *Form*

A majority of these house types have a wall to roof ratio of 2.5:1, like Type B properties. The rear of the properties has two bays extended as opposed to the single bay on Type B properties. The roofs are pitched front to back, but have chimneys placed at both gables.

### *Scale*

The scale of these properties, in terms of height mirrors 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century development in other locations, there is however little precedent in the immediate vicinity of houses of this scale.

### *Proportion*

Due to the arrangement of bays in this property type, the proportion of the façades is proportionally different to its

historic counterparts. They have a width to height ratio of approximately 1.2:1, making them slightly broader than tall. As with the other properties the larger window openings and their placement, break with the overall proportional composition.



Figure 11.47: Type C building appears more balanced with the use of dormer windows. Its arrangement of two narrow bays and two wide bays lacks precedent.

### *Rhythm*

It is the rhythm of the façades which is perhaps the feature that most lets the scheme down. In historic examples of double fronted properties tend to be a symmetrical with either three equal bays or wide-narrow-wide (Figure 11.47).

In the examples at Highgate the rhythm of the bays is narrow-narrow-wide, in combination with the offset nature of the placement of openings in other properties, this contributes to the unbalanced visual appearance in the scheme (Figure 11.48). This is further exaggerated in the properties which do not carry bay windows.



Figure 11.48: Type C building looks like a composite of other types in the scheme. The lack of symmetry and the space afforded to the wide bay has no precedent in any architecture analysed.



### 11.15 Material, Construction & Detail

The quality and variety of materials used in this project, perhaps elevate it above the other projects that have undergone visual analysis. Three different shades of brick are used in the scheme, all of which are distressed in some way to add a degree of authenticity and age to the development. They vary in shade from light brown through to red. With different shades of brick being used in close proximity to one another, further adding to the effect. Other properties in the scheme are treated with stucco, painted in ochre shades or white. Several properties also feature a uniform flat off white cladding (Figure 11.49).



Figure 11.49: The use of stone cladding in the scheme, which is uniform in finish. There is also the facade of one of the multiple occupancy properties in the terrace, with misaligned windows.



Figure 11.50: The rear of properties in the development, which feature square and pitched dormer windows.

Whilst the use of stucco and cladding contribute to an anonymity of construction, the positioning of brick built properties in close proximity aids a visual reading of the structure.

The sash windows and bay windows used throughout the scheme, closely mirror the materiality and proportions of the historic examples found in the area. The placement of the dormer windows on the front of the

façade aligned with the other openings, is characteristic of 19<sup>th</sup> Century design, however their use on the rear of the façades, as with The Chains, is possibly due to the duality of use, at the front and backs of the properties Figure (11.50). Details such as downpipes and hoppers, bare a close resemblance to historic examples, even the ironmongery in the scheme for the most part is well specified and in keeping with the period.



## 11.16 Conclusion

The first impression of this scheme is the quality of material and finish throughout. In comparison with the other schemes examined, there is a degree of attention to detail which elevates the scheme. It is in the design that it falls short in emulating the architecture it is referencing (Figure 11.51). The alignment and placement of openings in the bays is a departure from earlier development. The tendency in single fronted houses to place the openings in the narrow bay close to the gable, and the openings in the wider bay further away from the gable makes the properties lopsided.

This is in part due to the standardisation in the scheme, with this problem being less apparent in the houses which have bay windows. This is further exaggerated in the double fronted properties. The overall effect of this is an asymmetry which is not present in earlier development. The most successful properties in the scheme are the simplest, those which simply stick to using one size of sash window across the façade. There are many elements which are commendable about the scheme, yet it still raises the question of imitation and pastiche.



Figure 11.51: The quality of finish is clear even in the hard surfacing of the scheme, the combinations of colour and material contributing to the high standard of finish.

## 11.17 Surveys of Residents High Gate, Durham

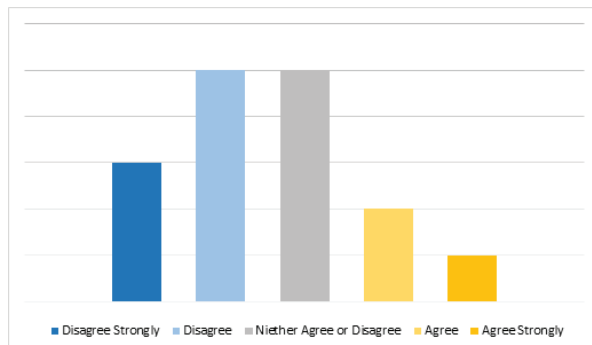
The High Gate development comprises of 26 flats and 34 houses. Of the households surveyed 16 were privately owned and 17 were rental properties.

- 16 Private Ownership
- 17 Rental Properties
- 1 No Answer

All 16 homeowners took part in the survey.

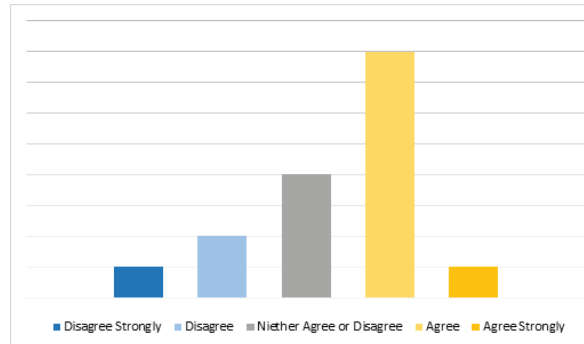
### Results

Question 1. *Was buying a new house, a key consideration when purchasing your home?*



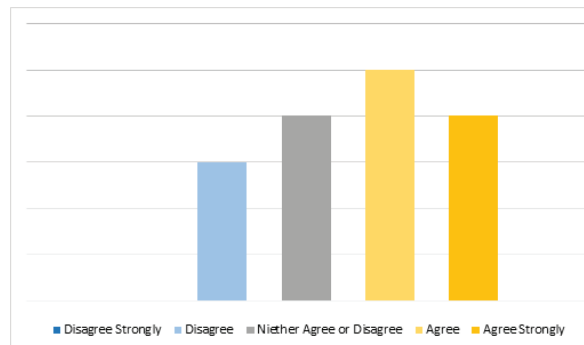
The histogram shows an almost normal distribution, indicating that a new house was not a key consideration in the purchase.

Question 2. *Did you consider buying a historic property?*



This result shows that a historic property was certainly considered in the purchase, and may have been preferred; but other factors took precedent.

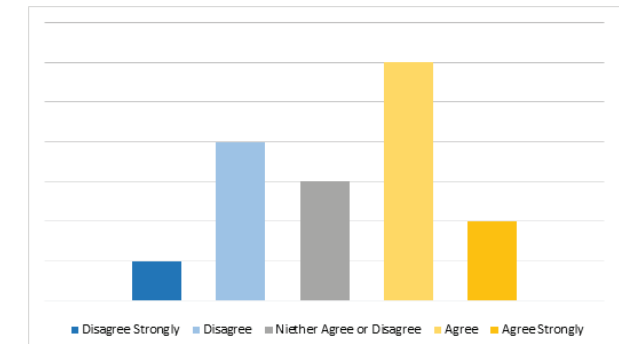
Question 3. *Was the location in a market town a primary factor in purchasing your house?*



This result was not as decisive as might have been expected. It tends towards the importance of a market town location but a number of respondents are ambivalent, and

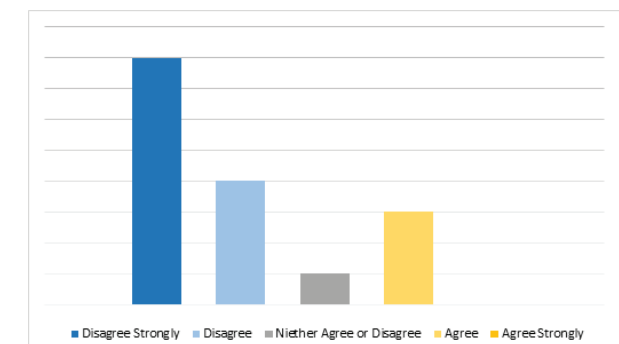
some indicated that it is not an important criterion.

Question 4. *Was the traditional appearance of the house an important consideration?*



On balance, it seems that a traditional appearance is important, but it is not a unanimous response.

Question 5. *Was your input into the specification of the house a key consideration when buying it?*

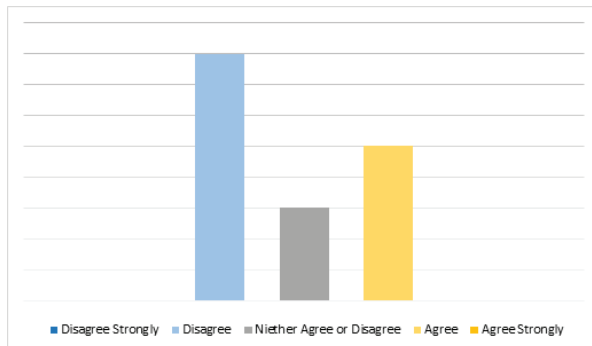


The majority of responses indicate that



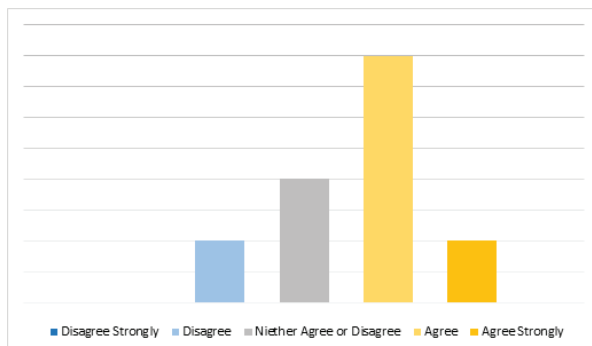
tailoring the house to the purchasers' needs, is not a major factor in house purchase. The inference is that a new house was not particularly being sought.

Question 6. *Are the rooms in your house sufficiently sized?*



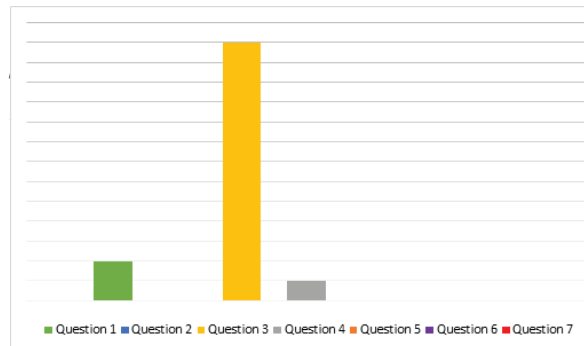
There was quite a mixed response to this question, although there is a tendency towards rooms not being sufficiently sized.

Question 7. *Was the provision of off road parking a significant factor in buying your house?*



Not a unanimous response, but most purchasers indicated that off road parking is a significant factor.

Question 8. *Which of the above questions was most significant when deciding to purchase this house?*



The response to question 3 was not as decisive as might have been expected. It inclines towards the importance of the market town setting without being it a primary factor. It may indicate that the purchasers of these houses were more open-minded about all the aspects considered.

## Conclusions

The outcome of the results was that:

- the market town location is felt to be important, but a number of respondents are ambivalent, and some indicated that it is not an important criterion. The responses

incline towards the importance of the market town setting without being it a primary factor.

- a historic property was certainly contemplated in the purchase, and may have been preferred; but other factors took precedent.
- most purchasers indicated that off road parking is a significant factor
- there is a tendency towards rooms not being sufficiently sized
- traditional appearance is important, but it is not a unanimous response
- tailoring the house to the purchasers' needs was not a major factor
- buying a new house was not a key consideration

There is an inference from the results that although some issues are more important than others, none of the considerations are essential.

*11.18 Housing Analysis Alnwick*

## 11.18 Analysis of Pottergate, Alnwick

### 11.19 Introduction

Pottergate, is located in the historic market town of Alnwick, in close proximity to the historic market place and castle. Alnwick is located on what was the main road between England and Scotland, linking Newcastle and Edinburgh. It is 35 miles north of Newcastle Upon Tyne and 34 miles south of Berwick Upon Tweed, making it equidistant between the two. It developed in association with this route and its strategic importance. The town has a mixture of buildings, the earliest of which date back to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. A majority of the houses, in Alnwick are of a similar period to those found in Corbridge and Durham. They date from 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century and are constructed from buff sandstone and latterly brick. In terms of proportion and design they sharing similar features. Pottergate is the only contemporary residential development in the centre of Alnwick, with only four other contemporary buildings in the centre (Figure 11.52). Like Durham it is a working town but also a destination for tourism, with Alnwick Castle and Gardens being an important visitor attractions run by the Duke of Northumberland Estate.

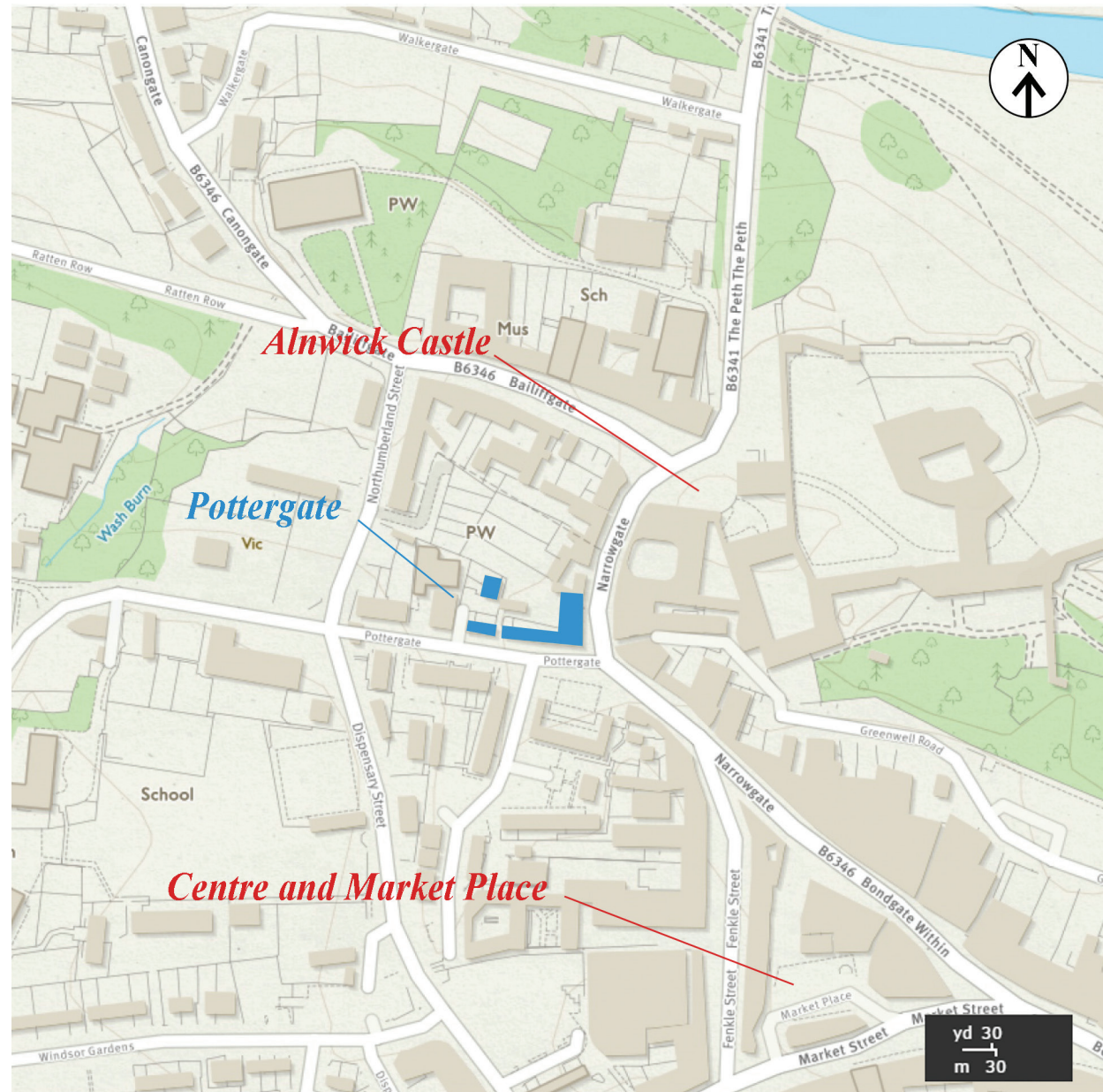


Figure 11.52: A map showing the location of Pottergate in the centre of Alnwick. Its proximity to the main street of Bondgate and Narrowgate, as well as the market place make its location prominent. It is also on the main route to Alnwick Castle.





Figure 11.53: The variety of buildings found on the Pottergate, Narrowgate junction, is indicative of the other architecture in the town.



Figure 11.54: The prominent tower of the Pottergate development, which dominates the street scene.

## 11.19 Composition

The Potters Gate development comprises 8 flats and 7 privately owned houses. The housing is arranged in terraces arranged in groupings of 2 and 3 properties. There are 2 terraces on Pottergate which are in groupings of 2 and 3 and a grouping of 2 houses to the rear. The development is mixed between multiple occupancy and owner-occupied houses. Designed by JDDK Architects, who were also responsible for the initial design of The Chains. It draws inspiration from the neighbouring 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings (Figure 11.53).

The scheme was developed in conjunction with The Duke of Northumberland Estates and completed in 2002. The dominant feature of this scheme is the multiple occupancy block, aesthetically influenced by Arts & Crafts architecture in particular Ballie Scott and Charles Rene Mackintosh (Figure 11.54). The housing is based on a single type, with different surface treatments used to add variety. The placement of openings in the scheme and surface treatments, ties the housing with the multiple occupancy part of the development. It reflects aspects of the architecture in the town,.





Figure 11.55: The terraced housing that forms part of the Pottergate development, with access to the rear of the terraces via the alleyway to the left and for the multiple occupancy via the coaching arch.

## 11.21 Housing Overview

The properties are terraced, with five houses located on Pottergate, split into a groupings of two and three and two houses located to the rear of the development. The multiple occupancy building in the scheme is also located on Pottergate. Similarities in material, detail and composition unify the development. Parking is located to the rear of the properties due to its central location, parking for the multiple occupancy building is accessed via an approximation of a coaching arch. Parking

for the housing accessed via a small lane, accessible from Pottergate. There is little segregation between the properties and the street; with front doors opening directly onto the pavement (Figure 11.55).

## 11.22 Housing Types

### *Housing Type A*

There are no clear examples of this type of property in Alnwick, it is representative of what some housebuilders refer to as *town house* style properties (Figure 11.56).



Figure 11.56: The elongated facade of one of the terraces and the odd placement of quoins and stonework at the eaves.





Figure 11.57: The composition of the terraces is standardised throughout, with the entrance placed on the left hand side and the wider bay to the right. The rhythm is similar to the design of 19<sup>th</sup> Century development. The uniformity of this is reflected in suburban development in the town, whereas development in the centre is primarily infill.

### *Form*

This house type is similar in form to the existing architecture in the area, it has straight walls and a pitched roof orientated front to back. It has a wall to roof ratio of approximately 2.5:1 and appears tall and narrow in comparison to historic properties in the town. All of the houses feature a chimney aligned with the right-

hand gable and parapet gables, which are a feature of the houses in close proximity to the development.

### *Scale*

These properties are arranged over three storeys, all of equal height. The scale of this house type, is similar to 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century development, however the top row

of openings in many historic properties are smaller. The narrowness of the houses is closer to two bays of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century double fronted properties in the market square.

### *Proportion*

Due to the width of bays, the proportion of the façades is different to its historic counterparts. The width to height ratio is approximately 1:2.5, making them narrow and tall. The openings are in keeping with those found in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings in the town and further emphasise the verticality.

### *Rhythm*

The bays in this house type are narrow and are arranged, narrow-wide on all groupings. The narrow bay contains the front door, with a sash window in alignment on the storeys above. The wider bay contains centrally aligned windows across all storeys. Two properties featuring a bay window on the first storey, which appears on one property in the wide bay and the other in the narrow bay. The rhythm of the bays at the rear of the properties, mirrors that of the front (Figure 11.57).



### 11.23 Material, Construction & Detail

Materiality is used to add variety in this scheme, there are several types of finish used. The first pair of properties on Pottergate are clad in sandstone, which is similar in colour to the older buildings in the town. Located next to these, is a terrace of three houses which have the same cladding on the ground floor, with a white rendered finish on the storeys above. The stone work is arranged in a stretching bond, there are points where the pattern has not been adhered to, if it were real stonework this would have structural implications. Brickwork is used throughout the development; it is a pale redbrick used in various shades to achieve a more historic appearance (Figure 11.58). The two properties at the rear of the terraces, do not have cladding and are finished in brick. The roofs are finished in slate, which is a similar colour to examples found in the town. The use of brick can be seen on the gables of the developments which have received cladding, adding to the legibility of the construction.

The detailing of the scheme is interesting, small details such as recessed stonework for circular doorbell fixtures and panelled doors are used to reference period architecture.



Figure 11.58: The two terraces at the back of the development are finished in brick and are the same design as the terraces on Pottergate. The use of brick is perhaps more suitable in this location, as opposed to imitating stonework or introducing surface finishes not found in the town.

The specification and design of the scheme lacks attention to detail. Letterboxes offset to the left in the front doors and the use of plastic rainwater goods, all contribute to the overall appearance of the scheme. Quoins are cut to three different sizes and appear to be arranged in an ad hoc manner not found in the town. Earlier examples use two sizes of quoin, alternating the width on the facade.

### 11.24 Conclusion

The scheme reflects an approach to architecture which references the past, but unlike The Chains or Highgate; there is no real reference made to the architecture which surrounds it. The most distinctive aspect of the development is the tower, which is part of the multiple occupancy aspect of the development. Like the

terraced housing on Pottergate it is finished in white render and stone cladding. Given the developments location, it is difficult not to reference the historic buildings which adjoin and surround the scheme when analysing it. They are representative of architecture from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century through to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and contrast heavily with scheme (Figure 11.59). While some buildings in the centre are whitewashed, the render finish has a uniformity of surface not found in the town. The same is also true of the cladding, which is machined with a uniform smooth surface. Its application shows little evidence of a mortar joint, something which is prominent on many of the older buildings. While the openings and window casements are similar in size and scale to their historic counterparts, they are set close to the surface of the façade. This has resulted in a very shallow reveal. It is the accumulative effect of design decisions and choices in specification, which make it neither a representation of the historic architecture or contemporary in its design.

Unlike Highgate and to a certain degree the Chains, the scheme has not attempted to manufacture a sense of gradual development. It is clearly read through form and material as a new development. Which produces a conflict of sorts, the use of



Figure 11.59: Examining the development in relation to the surrounding buildings, it is clear that it is new. The textures and colours of the older properties are not reflected in its materiality. Many of the design elements are in keeping with more historic architecture, such as the scale and proportions of openings.

modern and uniform materials does make it clear that it is contemporary. But, it is also reliant upon referencing historic design. In comparison with the historic architecture it lacks the attention to materiality and construction to emulate earlier building, yet although it is obviously contemporary it is not reflective of architectural design in the

present. The houses in the scheme which most reflect other buildings in the town are those to the rear of the terrace, hidden from view. The choice of brickwork used in the scheme, strongly reflects the brickwork used in the town and perhaps would have introduced less uniformity of texture and colour.



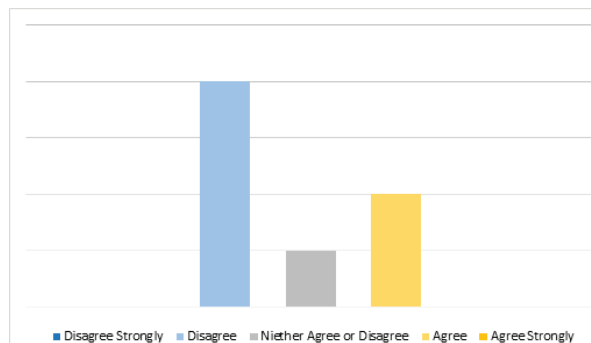
## 11.25 Surveys of Residents Potters Gate, Alnwick

The Potters Gate development comprises 8 flats and 7 privately owned houses. This development follows a similar pattern to other schemes located in market towns. Whereby, a location in close proximity to the centre of a town tends towards smaller schemes and a preference for off street parking. It is a mixed development between multiple occupancy and owner-occupied houses.

Of the houses in private ownership all 7 homeowners participated in the survey.

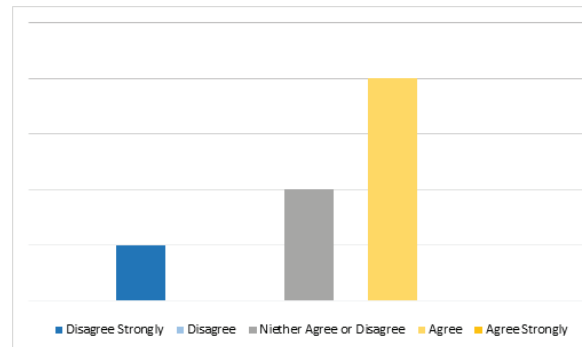
### Results

Question 1. *Was buying a new house, a key consideration when purchasing your home?*



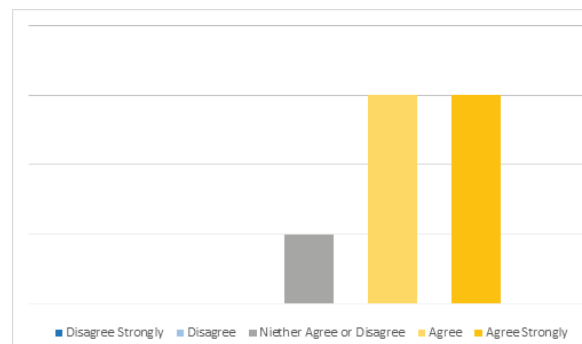
Not totally conclusive, but most residents did not view purchasing a new house as a key consideration.

Question 2. *Did you consider buying a historic property?*



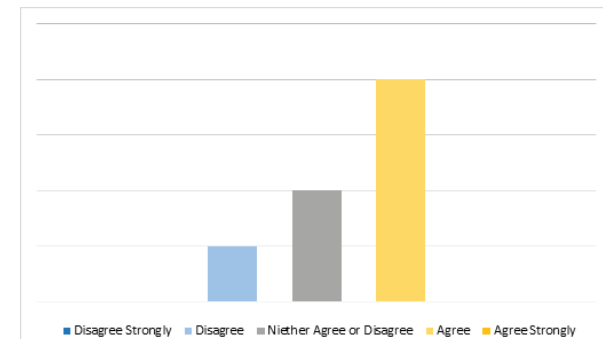
Most people considered buying a historic property, and this is strong enough response to indicate that it is a significant factor. It may also relate to the availability of historic housing in a location.

Question 3. *Was the location in a market town a primary factor in purchasing your house?*



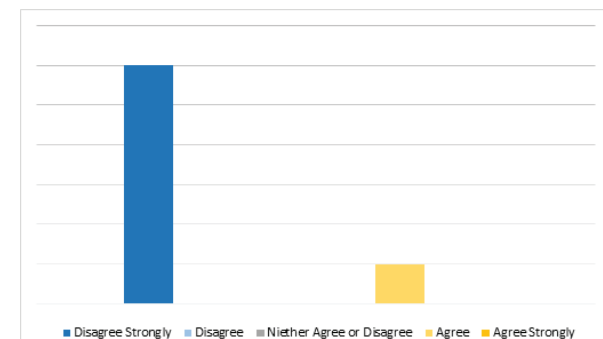
This is a strong result to show that location in a market town was a primary factor in the house purchase.

Question 4. *Was the traditional appearance of the house an important consideration?*



The responses indicate that traditional appearance is an important consideration.

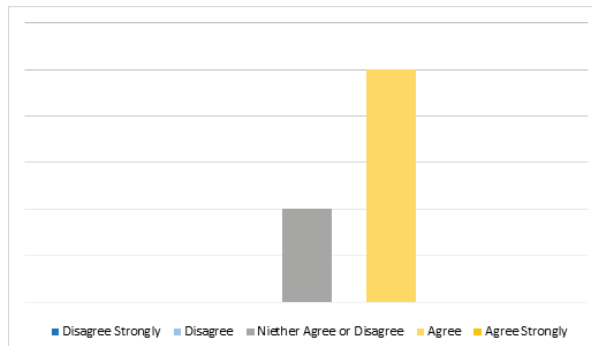
Question 5. *Was your input into the specification of the house a key consideration when buying it?*



This is a significant result which signifies that tailoring the house to the purchasers' needs was not important, and suggests that buying a new house was not necessarily a priority.

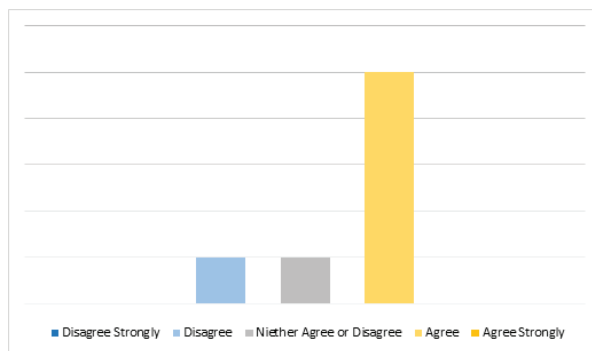


Question 6. *Are the rooms in your house sufficiently sized?*



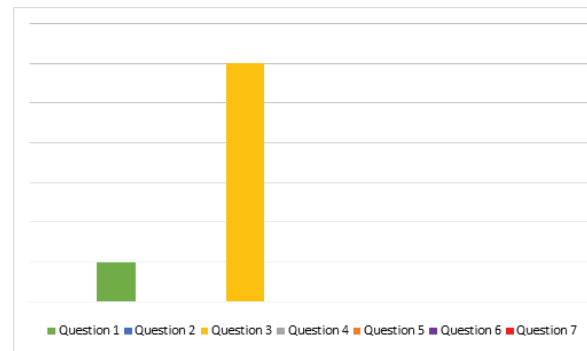
There are no results that suggest dissatisfaction with the size of rooms. A small number of residents are ambivalent but most assert that the rooms are sufficiently sized.

Question 7. *Was the provision of off road parking a significant factor in buying your house?*



As with the results of the previous surveys, these show that off road parking is important in buying a house.

Question 8. *Which of the above questions was most significant when deciding to purchase this house?*



The location in a market town was a primary factor in house purchase; and the response to that question was seen as the most significant.

## Conclusions

The outcome of the results was that:

- location in a market town was a primary factor in house purchase; and the response to that question was seen as the most significant.
- traditional appearance was an important consideration.
- the results showed that off road parking is significant in buying a house.
- most people considered buying a historic property
- there are no results that suggest dissatisfaction with the size of rooms.
- it is not totally conclusive but most

residents did not view purchasing a new house as a key consideration

- tailoring the house to the purchasers' needs was not important, and suggests that buying a new house was not necessarily a priority. However this could also depend on if the property is bought off plan.

*11.26 Housing Analysis Prudhoe*

## 11.26 Analysis of Acorn Square, Prudhoe

### 11.27 Introduction

Prudhoe is located on the south bank of the River Tyne, in the Tyne Valley 12 miles west of Newcastle Upon Tyne. The other locations that have been examined can all be described as visitor destinations, places which attract tourism. Prudhoe, whilst boasting a fine castle is more of a working town which grew from early coal mining in the medieval period. It was important to examine a location like this in the context of this research, as approaches to design and expectation may be different. A majority of development in the town has been in association with Front Street, which is the main thoroughfare. This route connected the castle, to the higher ground on which the town developed. The buildings on Front Street are mixed, with infill development from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century through to the present. The primary materials are buff sandstone and brickwork. Unlike the other locations examined, there are no buildings which exceed two storeys in height. Successive periods of development, have kept to this established scale into the present. Front Street, can be seen as the centre of the town (Figure 11.60).



Figure 11.60: The location of the development behind Front Street. The buildings analysed are highlighted in blue, with the semi-detached property evident on the end of the multiple occupancy development. With Riding mill to the west and Newcastle Upon Tyne to the east.





Figure 11.61: A view east along Front Street, shows a wider variety of development than the other locations examined. The buildings in the centre are a mixture of styles, with housing located at either end of the high street.

## 11.28 Housing Overview

Acorn Square is located directly behind Front Street and is comprised of 5 houses and 13 flats. The housing was complete in 1996 and developed by Nicholson Nairn Architects. As with the other schemes that have been analysed, it is a mixed development of houses and flats. In the context of the other schemes examined, it reflects local and national planning requirements.

The scheme is located on a plot of land directly behind Front Street. As with the locations of the other studies, a majority of the architecture dates from 18<sup>th</sup> Century to the present (Figure 11.61). What is apparent is the simplicity of many of the buildings, in comparison with the other locations examined. The materiality of the area is a mixture of buff sandstone and brick (Figure 11.62). The properties closest to the development are two storey terraced houses (Figure 11.63).



Figure 11.62: Infill development close to the scheme, which has elements of 19<sup>th</sup> Century architecture and possibly earlier elements.



Figure 11.63: The first of the two multiple occupancy blocks in the scheme, with the 19<sup>th</sup> Century terraced housing in the background.



## 11.29 Housing Types

The housing comprises of one double fronted property and four terraced houses. The detached property is located at the gable end of a block containing four flats. Though not fully detached in this respect, it gives the effect of a detached property. The terraced housing is standalone in the scheme and located to the rear of the development. The parking is off street located at the centre of the development, opposite the terraced properties.

### *Housing Type A*

The arrangement of this property is strange as it is part of a larger multiple occupancy block, and is formed in the gable end of the building.

### *Form*

Examining the form of this type, is difficult as it is part of a larger building. The building has a pitched roof which is similar in height to the surrounding architecture. The section of the building which forms the double fronted property, has a pitched roof from left to right, as opposed to front to back. The rest of the building behind this property has dormer



Figure 11.64: Double fronted property, the facade of which features an arrangement of openings, which is not found in other properties. It reads as if it originally had three bays, with the door in the centre and two vertically aligned windows in the outside bays. It looks as if the window on the left at ground floor, has been added and the other windows moved in relation to it on the plans and elevations.

gables, with this section of the building featuring two on each side elevation. Whilst the overall form is not reflective of any other building examined, it does reference some aspects found in traditional architecture (Figure 11.64).

### **Proportion**

The proportion of the building despite its orientation, is similar to that of historic two storey properties in the locality. The width of the property is also in



keeping with smaller double fronted properties of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century, it is its relationship with the roof, which proportionately differentiates it. The openings on this property are similar in size and proportion to those used in The Chains and are shorter and broader than those found on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century properties in the town.

### *Rhythm*

The façade of this property can be roughly divided in three, with the door located in central bay. Reading the rhythm is more complex as the placement of the windows does not correspond with the bays. It is difficult to establish if their placement is intended to reflect historic changes of use and amendment. The two sets of windows that appear to be vertically aligned, either side of the doorway are offset inwards on the first floor. But the placement of them in relation to the door makes it feel like little consideration was given to the composition. The two bays on each the side of the building, correspond with the dormer gables. They are in vertical alignment, a feature seen in architecture in other parts of the Tyne Valley.

## ***Housing Type B***

### *Form*

This housing type is relatively conventional in appearance and in a grouping of four terraced properties, with pitched roofs and straight elevations. All of the properties feature dormer gables, which is an architectural feature referenced throughout the Tyne Valley.

The approximate ratio of wall to roof is 2:1, which is in keeping with other properties of this size (Figure 11.65). The properties feature projected mono-pitch porches. This feature does not appear in historic properties in this location, however the use of similar lean-to porches is found in traditional architecture. The outer properties in the grouping carry this feature in isolation, whereas the two central properties have joined porches.



Figure 11.65: The proportion of wall to roof, is legible in the eaves height of the lean-to porches. The effect of the dormers on the roof form is also clear, with two sizes used which correspond with the width of the window openings.



*Scale*

The scale of the properties is in keeping with many of the buildings found on Front Street, two storeys in height. It also reflects the other buildings in the scheme with none exceeding this.

### Proportion

The façades have a width to height ratio of approximately 1:1.5, with the whole terrace having the visual appearance of a unified whole. The openings in the terrace are the same as the detached property, there are also two sets of French doors on the first floor of the outer properties. They are a multiplication of the standard sized window approximately two times the height. Whilst they are not a historic feature, in terms of proportion they do not appear out of place.

## Rhythm

The rhythm of the terrace is similar to infill development in Prudhoe and the Tyne Valley. The properties have a narrow bay for the doorway and a wider bay for the living accommodation, the pattern of the development is narrow-wide-narrow-wide-wide-narrow-wide-narrow



Figure 11.66: The composition of this small terrace, is similar to historic groupings of four houses in market towns. With the outer bays handed with the doorway appearing at the outer bay and the doorways of the two inner houses handed together.

creating a symmetrical composition. All of the openings are vertically aligned, with the openings in the broader bays corresponding with the gable dormers (Figure 11.66).

### 11.30 Material, Construction & Detail

The properties that are located close to the scheme are 19<sup>th</sup> Century terraces, they are

all finished in red brickwork. The brickwork used is a reasonable match for its historic counterpart, it is varied in colour reducing its uniformity. The double fronted property is stone clad, in a colour of stone which is close to some of the older stonework in the town. It appears out of place in comparison with neighbouring buildings, a majority of which are brick. There are 8 sizes of stone used to give the impression of older

random masonry, despite this the relatively small size and standardised shapes neither mirror ashlar masonry or random masonry. The roof of the semi-detached property is finished in red pan tile, whereas the terraces are finished in a grey/ brown pan tile; close in colour to the slate roofs of neighbouring developments. The eaves, soffit and dormer gables are all finished in timber, which has been finished in an ochre treatment.

The detailing of the scheme is quite basic, stone cladding is used to form quoins on the porches of the terrace. There are no chimneys on the development, the terraces have a red tile roof ridge with small finial at each gable. The Soldier courses are used above the windows to emulate earlier lintels. The front door of the detached property has a canopy constructed in timber with a red pantile pitched roof. It also differs from the terraces with the specification of stone lintels and sills.

### **11.31 Conclusion**

First impressions of this scheme are that it is in some ways less considered, in comparison with the other schemes that have been analysed. The location in Prudhoe, would also suggest a slightly different market to Alnwick or Corbridge.

While the semi-detached property seems out of place with its stone work, rhythm and form. The terraced properties use aspects of design found in the region, without directly emulating it. The use of dormer gables can be found in properties in the Tyne Valley, the rhythm of the properties is also reflective of earlier development in the region. The addition of French doors at the first floor, is a move away from traditional architecture, with the balcony railing looking a little out of place a simpler one may have been more in keeping with the scheme. What marks these terraces out is their simplicity, unlike other developments the buildings appear new but feature some historic design elements.

In comparison to the stone clad detached property they could almost belong to different schemes. The architecture does reference various periods, pan tile roofs, lean-to porches, gabled dormers, however there does not seem to be a want to deliberately imitate historic architecture in the more literal manner that other schemes have. The timber eaves also contribute to a sense of historic architecture, but are visibly modern. It is not directly imitating historic stonework and accepting that brick is a structural component unchanged, bar its dimensions from imperial to metric.

The use of brick in this sense has a historic precedent, but also a legible structural purpose. The simplicity of the terrace and its scale are similar in a sense to the traditional rows houses found in the region. A less literal and facsimile interpretation of architectural elements found in Northumberland has been achieved to a certain degree.

## 11.32 Survey of Residents Acorn Square, Prudhoe

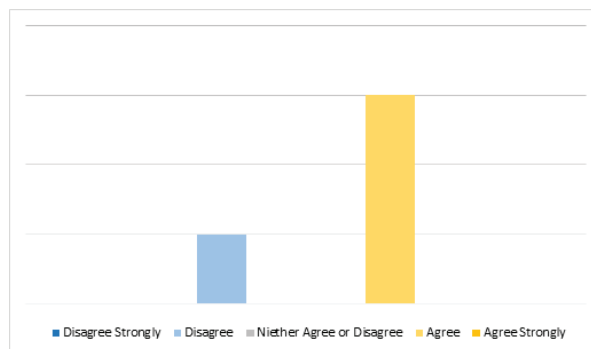
The Acorn Square development comprises of 13 flats and 5 houses, of which 4 are privately owned and 1 is for sale. Whilst this is a low number of houses to examine, it is representative of development close to the centre of market towns. It is mixed between multiple occupancy and private housing.

- 4 Private Ownership
- 1 No Answer

Of the properties in private ownership, all 4 homeowners participated in the survey.

### Results

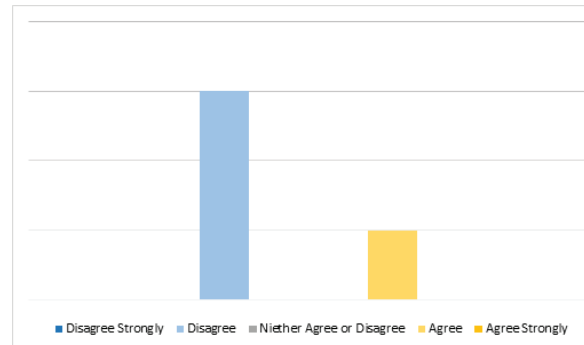
Question 1. *Was buying a new house, a key consideration when purchasing your home?*



Purchasing a new house is an important

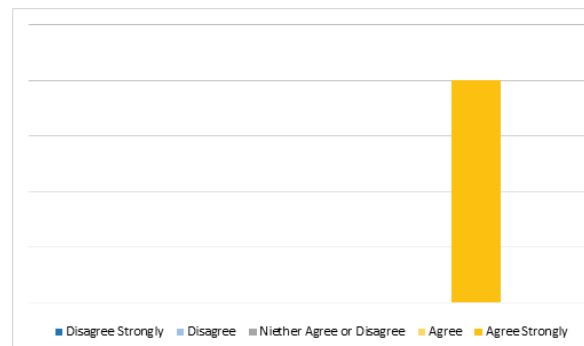
issue in for residents in this development.

Question 2. *Did you consider buying a historic property?*



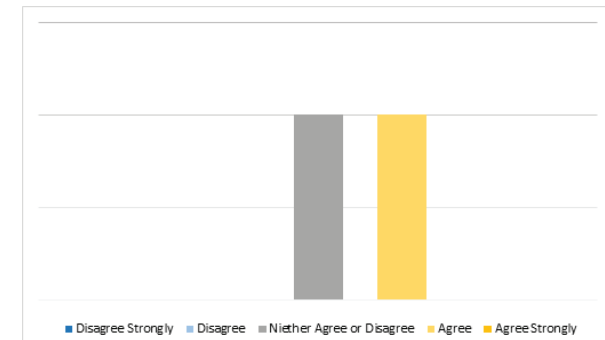
As a corollary to the responses to the previous question, there was little interest in purchasing a historic property.

Question 3. *Was the location in a market town a primary factor in purchasing your house?*



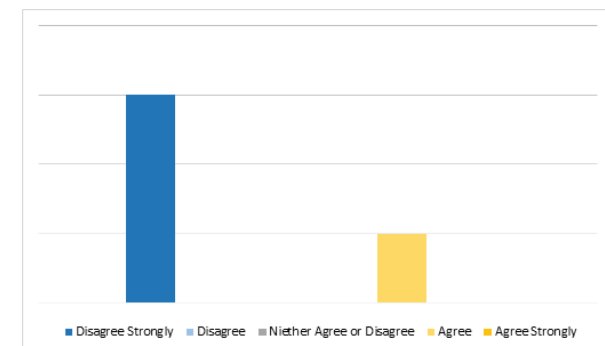
The result to this question is conclusive, with all participants stating that location was key to the purchase of their property.

Question 4. *Was the traditional appearance of the house an important consideration?*



There was split response to the importance of traditional appearance. It was not unimportant to any of the residents but half of them are ambivalent about it.

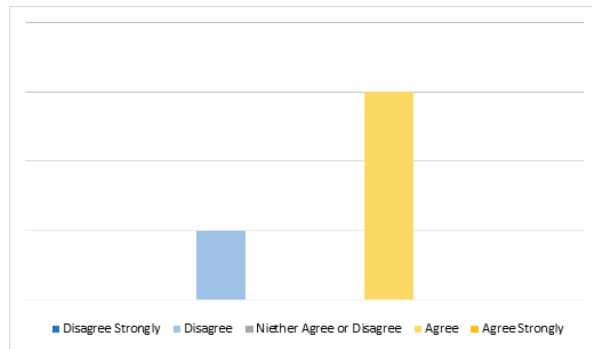
Question 5. *Was your input into the specification of the house a key consideration when buying it?*



The majority of respondents were not interested in tailoring a new house to their particular needs when purchasing it.

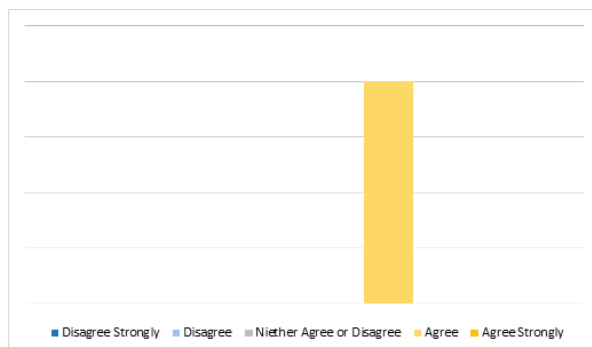


Question 6. *Are the rooms in your house sufficiently sized?*



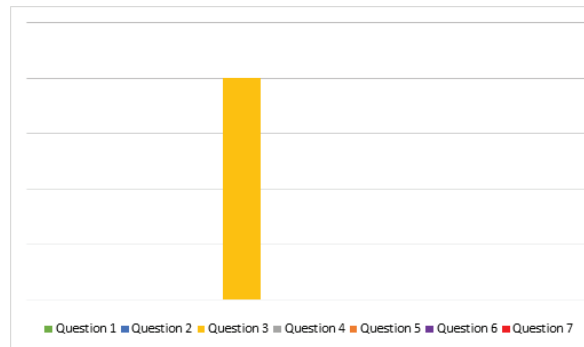
The majority of respondents agreed that the rooms in their house are sufficiently sized.

Question 7. *Was the provision of off road parking a significant factor in buying your house?*



All participants agreed that off road parking was a significant factor in buying their house.

Question 8. *Which of the above questions was most significant when deciding to purchase this house?*



Location in a market town was considered to be a key factor, and all respondents stated it was most significant issue in purchasing their house.

## Conclusions

- all participants stated that location was key in their decision to purchase their house and that it was most significant issue.
- all participants agreed that off road parking was a significant factor in buying their house.
- purchasing a new house seems to be quite an important issue.
- the majority of respondents agreed that the rooms in their house are sufficiently sized
- there was split response to the importance of traditional appearance. It was not unimportant to any of the residents but half of them are ambivalent about it.

- the majority of respondents were not interested in tailoring a new house to their particular needs when purchasing it.
- there was little interest in purchasing a historic property.

### *11.33 Comparative Analysis of Surveys*

### 11.33 Comparative Analysis of Studies

To establish an overall picture of the key factors in the purchase of properties in these schemes. A comparative analysis of the data will be used to establish key findings.

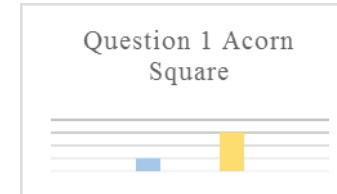
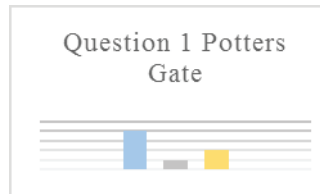
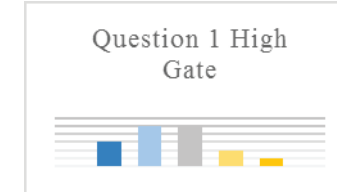
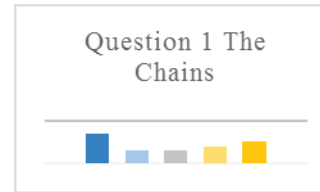
Question 1. *Was buying a new house, a key consideration when purchasing your home?*

In comparing the data collected from all four developments, there is a clear correlation between, The Chains, High Gate and Potters Gate. A majority of respondents, did not feel that buying a new property was a key consideration, this constituted a mean of 50.5% of respondents. Whereas although smaller in numbers, the purchase of a new property was a key consideration for those living in Acorn Square. The results of this are possibly demographic and may be influenced by age as well as class.

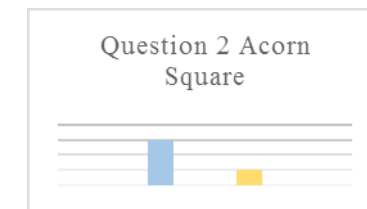
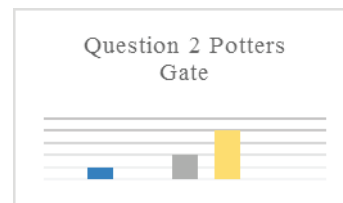
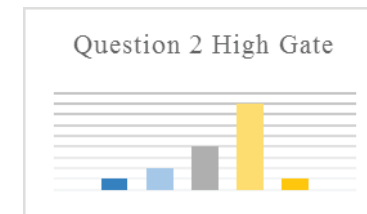
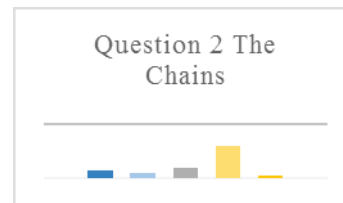
Question 2. *Did you consider buying a Historic property?*

As with Question 1, a large proportion of resident's in The Chains, High Gate and Potters Gate, show that buying a historic property was a key consideration for a majority of respondents. This is with the exception of Acorn Square, this points towards a preference for new development. The overall mean for **agree** and **agree strongly** is 57%.

1. Was buying a new house, a key consideration when purchasing your home?

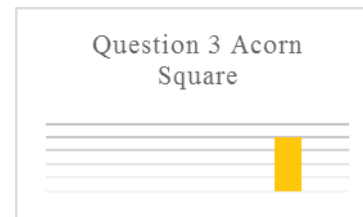
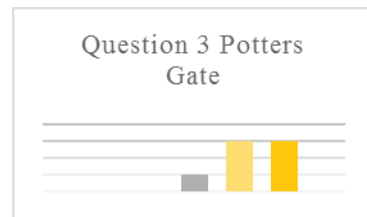
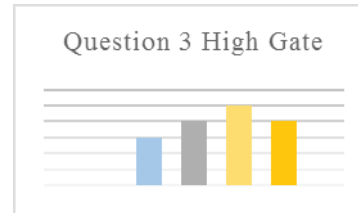
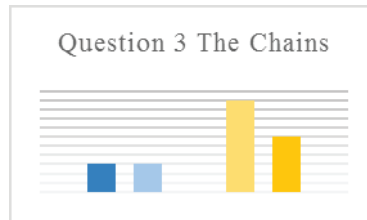


2. Did you consider buying a Historic property?





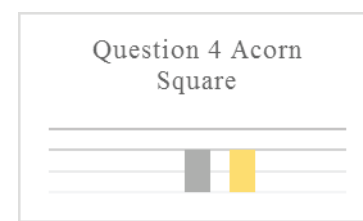
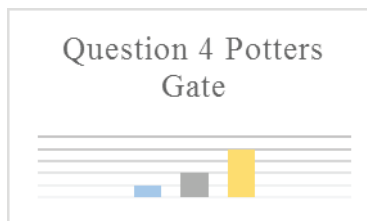
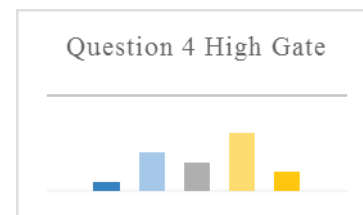
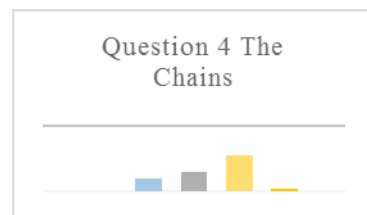
### 3. Was the location in a market town a primary factor in purchasing your house?



Question 3. *Was the location in a market town a primary factor in purchasing your house?*

All of the results from this question show a clear preference for location, as a key factor in the purchase of properties in these schemes. Of all of the questions proposed, this question is possibly the most definitive in terms of responses for **agree** and **strongly agree** and may also correlate with the central location of these developments, this represents a mean of 67.75% of respondents.

### 4. Was the traditional appearance of the house an important consideration?



Question 4. *Was the traditional appearance of the house an important consideration?*

The results from this question show a clear preference for a traditional appearance with responses for **agree** and **strongly agree**, representing a mean of 53%. With Acorn Square being equally split, between **agree** and **neither agree or disagree**. There is also proportionally a similar response across the responses in terms of **neither agree or disagree**, which is a mean of 19.5% who show an indifference to the style of properties.

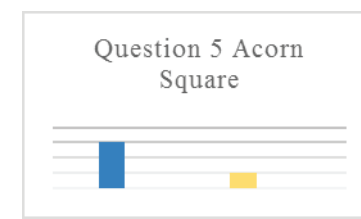
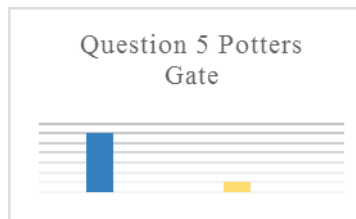
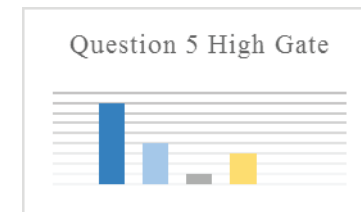
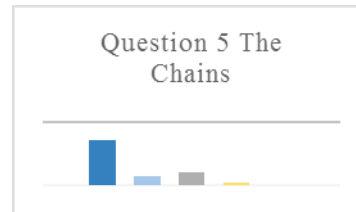
Question 5. *Was your input into the specification of the house a key consideration when buying it?*

There is a clear correlation between the time of purchase and input into specification. What the data seems to represent is a high degree of change in ownership in these schemes, which may be the basis for future research. It would seem to demonstrate that many of these properties are not seen as permanent homes? The mean of respondents who **disagree** or **disagree strongly** is 78.5%, which represents a very high proportion of homeowners in these schemes.

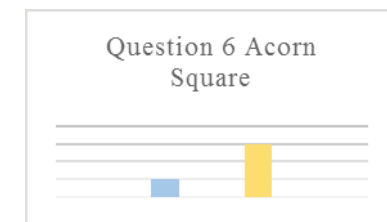
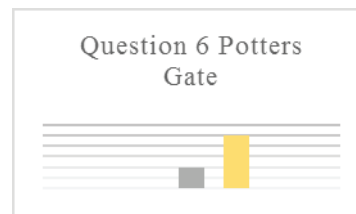
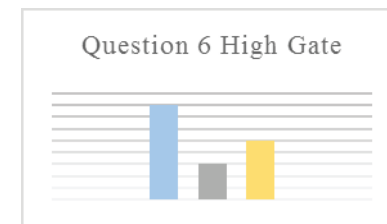
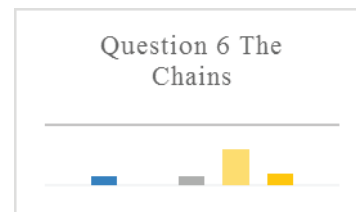
Question 6. *Are the rooms in your house sufficiently sized?*

There is a clear degree of satisfaction with the size of the rooms in The Chains, Potters Gate and Acorn Square. This represents a mean of 73% among the three schemes. High Gate demonstrates a greater degree of dissatisfaction with the size of rooms, on balance there is a split between 8 respondents who show a degree of dissatisfaction, with 5 **agreeing** they were satisfied and 3 **neither agreeing or disagreeing**. This demonstrates a 50% level of dissatisfaction with the room size.

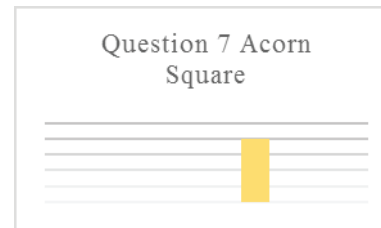
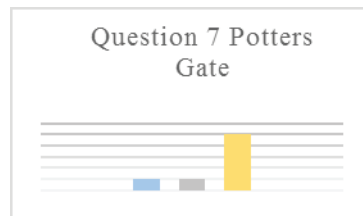
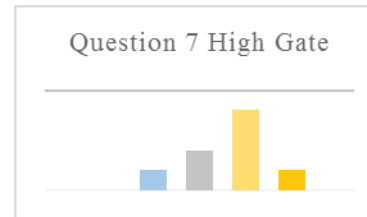
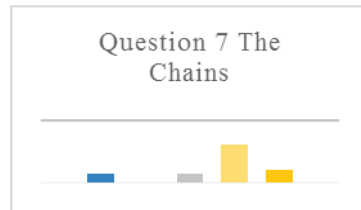
5. Was your input into the specification of the house a key consideration when buying it?



6. Are the rooms in your house sufficiently sized?



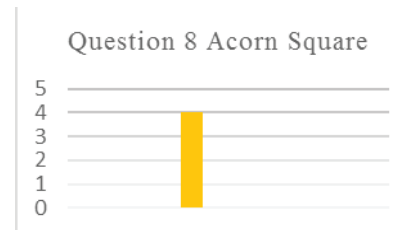
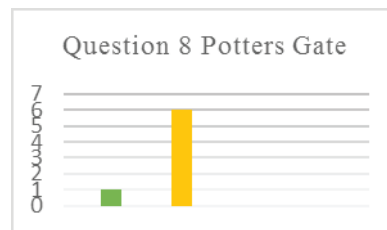
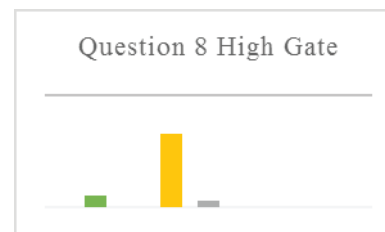
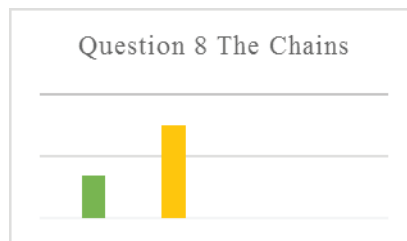
7. Was the provision of off road parking a significant factor in buying your house?



Question 7. *Was the provision of off road parking a significant factor in buying your house?*

The mean percentage of participants who **agreed** or **agreed strongly** that parking was a key aspect of their decision, with mean of 65.25%. With a smaller representation of those who disagree, which are representative of 12.5% of those surveyed.

8. Which of the above questions was most significant when deciding to purchase this house?



Question 8. *Which of the above questions was most significant when deciding to purchase this house?*

There are two clear outcomes from this question, those who have prioritised a new home who are representative of 18% of respondents. The priority given to location is reflected in the mean of 79% of respondents who expressed location as being key to their decision.

## Conclusion

Questions 1, 2, 4, all relate to the design of properties, either contemporary interpretations of historic architecture or the purchase of historic houses. Asking respondents firstly, *if buying a new house, was a key consideration,*



*if they had considered a historic house and if they felt a traditional appearance was important?* This was in order to establish what the priorities of home owners were, when making such decisions. It also had the purpose of attempting to establish in locations which contain large amounts of historic housing, why a new property was purchased and if the aesthetic of it contributed to the purchase. The size and status of the properties in High Gate, The Chains and Potters Gate, exceeded those of Acorn Square. With these three schemes, showing a higher level of people who had considered buying historic properties.

Though a far smaller sample, there was a preference in Acorn Square for new properties. What is shared between these developments is a preference for traditional style properties, though the mean of 53% is not as high as I had anticipated, it is reflective of the design approaches taken in the development of all four schemes. Gauging attitudes towards internal space was important to establish user satisfaction. Many of the house styles emulated, are influenced by Georgian and Victorian architecture which in comparative typologies is spacious. The internal spaces in The Chains, Potters Gate and Acorn Square

was met favourably with 73% of people in these schemes agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were adequately sized. It is therefore interesting that High Gate, which won several design awards showed a lower degree of satisfaction.

It is clear from the data that irrespective of development, the location is a key factor in the purchasing of properties. However, I did not expect it to be the key factor from a majority of surveys. The proximity of all of the developments to the centre of market towns offers amenities and transport connectivity. The results expressed the importance of off-road parking to many, with a mean of 65.25% identifying this as a key factor. The provision of parking was questioned, as it reflects the increasing space dedicated to the motor car in new developments, as highlighted in the visual analysis. It was important to gauge the opinion of homeowners on this, especially given the high degree of connectivity that is afforded in all four schemes in terms of rail and public transport. A majority of these schemes are now in excess of 15 years old now and question 5 revealed that a large proportion of home owners had not done so since they were first built. Which is suggestive of a possible high

turnover of ownership. Whilst it is difficult to establish in the bounds of this thesis why that is, it would be interesting to compare this to the amount of time people reside in historic properties, to ascertain if new properties have a tendency towards more transient home ownership. In conclusion, it appears that the data supports many of the design practises undertaken by developers, but perhaps not as conclusively as I had expected. In order to establish a wider picture of these issues in terms of development, I will conduct a series of interviews with, architects, planners and developers, to establish their informed opinions on this subject matter. This is with a view to examining this data in relation to that of professionals, but also to set this against the theoretical and visual analysis to establish the criteria for more locally responsive development.

*11.34 Interviews with Professionals*

### 11.34 Interviews with professionals

#### 11.35 Introduction

In order to fully understand the processes by which professionals develop key approaches to the design process and its mediation, it was important to conduct a series of interviews with those directly involved in the process.

Having examined the criteria by which residents chose to purchase properties in the schemes that have undergone analysis, establishing the opinions of professionals of the key aspects that have shaped their design enables a greater degree of comparative analysis. This is useful as public expectation can be assessed against professional expertise, in order to develop a more holistic understanding of the design and development of schemes in market towns. This providing a greater degree of understanding with regard to the development of housing in market towns.

#### 11.36 Results

**Question 1. *Should new development incorporate similar material and aesthetic design strategies to the existing architecture?***

### Architects

#### Respondent 1

*No definitive answer to this, it is based upon the context of a development., so that future generations can read it as such and follow the pattern of development in a. It is dependent on surrounding buildings, sometimes it is more appropriate to do something which is more akin to the other buildings around it. There should be an attempt to support heritage significance. That depends on what the heritage significance is and how it can be protected and enhanced. You should allow a new building to sit and be read on its own merits.*

#### Respondent 2

*New development shouldn't necessarily mirror the existing or historic architecture of a location. The mixing of new material and traditional materials is one way in which we have approached this. It is obviously site specific, but the projects we have done have tended towards more modern or contemporary design in these types of location. It is also about fenestration design, scale, proportion and designing something which is sympathetic, in a many cases, it is possible to do both reference the old and incorporate the new.*

### Findings

Both answers highlight the use of new and old materials, with Respondent 1, demonstrating the need for new houses to be read as such, through their materiality and aspects of form. Respondent 2 designs housing which is contemporary in mixed materials and detailing, which also demonstrates that the architecture is contemporary. The schemes produced have been more contemporary in there design.

### Planners

#### Respondent 1

*Paragraph 58 of The National Planning Policy Framework requires Good Design to: "respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation" The key here is the interpretation of "appropriate innovation". Design needs to respond in terms of scale and massing in respect of townscape, with design from local context in terms of materiality. A good understanding of local context prior to development of sketch proposals should inform the design process.*



## Respondent 2

Development should be dependent on the proposed location, mirroring existing architecture sometimes does not work. We are looking for innovative development that understands the core historic area, that can take things from that which will enhance new development. We are looking for innovative development which understands the core historic area, to provide a relevant scheme in line with section 72 of the planning act.

## Findings

Both of the answers provided by the Planners point to referencing the existing materiality of a location, using this to develop housing which is relevant to the location, though necessarily emulating the existing architecture. Examining the first response, it would appear to imply that innovative contemporary design can fit into a traditional environment; provided it complements the existing.

## Developers

### Respondent 1

*It is dependent on the reasons for an area being historic, you get areas which are historic for specific reasons. As a*

*general rule, yes development should mirror existing architecture types; but in certain contexts then it should almost be a juxtaposition to the existing architecture. This could be very. Building regulations are a key constraint, using new materials it's difficult to mirror old development.*

### Respondent 2

*It often does, because it's acceptable to the local community. We have done more modern or contemporary developments but they have tended to be in cities rather than historic towns and villages. It is a risk, because you want to get a development through the planning process as smoothly as possible. If it is of a good quality, then that should be the most important thing. Personally I think that development should be more modern, but a lot of this comes down to the local communities, but I can see this changing as communities' change.*

## Findings

The answers from developers are interesting as both suggest that more contemporary development may be preferable. Due to planning and building regulations along with communities, there is a tendency to develop traditional schemes.

## Summary

The architects and planners, both highlight an approach to materiality and design which can be interpreted as contemporary. Whereas the developers both point to the fact that contemporary approaches to materiality and development is something they would consider, but concede that generally a traditional approach is used. What is reflected in all the answers is a want to produce more contemporary schemes, however the design of more traditional schemes seems to be the safer option.

**Question 2. Why does new development lean towards an emulation of historic architecture?**

## Architects

### Respondent 1

*There is a sense that many developers produce schemes like this, because that is what they have always done. Therefore, their experience of the market place in terms of selling homes, has been on the basis of this type of property being offered. It is what has proved successful for them. I am not sure how many developers have tested whether alternative design*

*approaches would be successful. As they are not risk takers due to the market they inhabit. They are interested in low risk and high profit, going back to Garden Cities and the Arts & Crafts movement they hark back to a better world. Many developers have not taken the plunge to test the market en masse.*

## **Respondent 2**

*Many of these types of development go for trying to match local materials brickwork, stone, but it should involve more than that. It's a safe approach, it's not really taking any risks if you try to just copy what is there. There are also, as we have found design codes for some of these places, which give you a set pattern of bricks or stonework to follow. From our experience, design codes became a bit of a noose around our neck, leaving us to try and stretch it as far as we could. For other developers it might represent an easy way of getting a project through. In some cases, it might work, if you are developing in a small village in Northumberland, you can't go in and just put white render over everything.*

## **Findings**

There is a consensus between these

responses that developers often opt for design which mirrors existing architecture as it is a tried and tested strategy and a perceived ease of passing schemes through the planning process.

## **Planners**

### **Respondent 1**

*It's the easy "safe" option for some designers and planners. Copying the past is less challenging and probably more certain to achieve Planning consent with a generally "conservative" population and their representatives as elected members. Designs which are conceptually, visually or intellectually more challenging can be seen as threatening or potentially elitist. The same could be said for both the developer, Fear of change, perceived failure of post war modernism within the general public, lack of exposure and subsequent awareness of design.*

### **Respondent 2**

*Sometimes I personally think it's whether the developers or architects are up to the job. Mirroring existing development sometimes does not work. We assess developments on the basis of showing some cognizance of the surrounding built environment. Are materials indigenous to*

*the area and if not are they complimentary to the existing environment. There are a whole range of things which are considered in the determination of an application.*

## **Findings**

The views of the planners, are similar to those of the architects who participated. There is a perception that emulating the existing architecture is the failsafe approach. Respondent 1 also touches upon the demographics and *conservative population* attitudes involved in the process of planning applications.

## **Developers**

### **Respondent 1**

*The answer is politics, the planning process is obviously a political one and in order to achieve a scheme which is viewed positively in an area. The way in which most developers do this is to keep within the existing qualities of an area. This way they are not challenging the planning department or local community, it's giving people what they want.*

### **Respondent 2**

*Really it's like I was saying in the first*

*question, it is about making a product that people want to buy but also that fits in to a local area and is acceptable to the people who live there. So if a new development takes on some of the aspects of the older buildings around it, it is a way of producing houses that can be seen as part of that place. You can't make them the same, as technology and planning are different now; but you can incorporate some of the ideas.*

## **Findings**

The results of the interviews with developers, is similar to that of planners. The issue of new housing emulating existing architecture, is identified as being based on public opinion. Designing developments in this way offers the line of least resistance.

## **Summary**

There is a consensus amongst the responses to this question, that mirroring existing development is a safe option. The planners and developers point towards public opinion and local communities. This is also mirrored by the architects, who point to this as being a safe approach.

## **Question 3. Should new domestic architecture be more reflective of architectural design in the present.**

### **Architects**

#### **Respondent 1**

*I would love architecture to be more reflective of contemporary design. If architects had more control over things, then it would be more-so. But unfortunately the way in which companies work even in collaboration with architects they are cautious. The nature of the way companies work to deliver much of our domestic architecture, makes it difficult to bring about changes in design approaches.*

#### **Respondent 2**

*I am not a fan of the way many companies approach design, it does not excite me. A lot of the work we do as a company reflects things that people like, pitched roofs and traditional materials but we try to present them in a more contemporary way.*

### **Findings**

There is a consensus amongst the architects interviewed, that the retrospective approach taken by developers is a negative thing and that architects would be more likely to produce contemporary schemes

in these locations. Yet the nature of speculative development, is speculative and high risk.

### **Planners**

#### **Respondent 1**

*Domestic Architecture should primarily reflect Good design: whether a pastiche of the past, or a contemporary take on local vernacular, or be purely "modernist". The key is good design. My own personal preference would be that design should reflect the time that it is built in, however responding to context and setting.*

#### **Respondent 2**

*When talking about market towns there are probably different criteria between them and say an urban area. The key thing with historic buildings in these locations, is appearance and attractiveness. What is failing in my opinion is that many schemes that come forward are failing to engage with these ideas. You can have a scheme which meets the key considerations, but because of new materials and the fact that less attention is paid to craft and detailing in the present; needs further guidance from us to try and make it as attractive as possible. As part of the process we ask developers to use traditional materials,*



*natural stone and so on. We expect samples to be provided, leadwork, cast iron rain goods, stone work. Even with this they can't meet the same standards as older buildings, so where do you go from that?*

### **Findings**

The first answer, highlights that the quality of a scheme is ultimately more important than the design approach taken. The second response emphasizes the difference in criteria associated with development in market towns and the quality of the finished scheme. Both highlight the difficulty of authentically reproducing traditional architecture. What is interesting is the use of similar terms, which are recognizable from design guidance, appearance and attractiveness, good design,

### **Developers**

#### **Respondent 1**

*I am of the opinion that any area has the ability to absorb multiple architectural styles, that's what adds to the character of an area. It's up to the landowner and developer, to decide what they think is best for what they want to do with any piece of land. Most developments, should be reflective of that. Contemporary design is*

*on the increase. A lot of new developments occur which look to the past and are partly due to the political system they are built under.*

#### **Respondent 2**

*I think so, but it depends on what you mean by that, you can take some of the features that are in a place and still produce something that is modern. But it's down to where it is which often determines how far you can go with a design. As I said we have produced schemes which you can say were modern, these have often been more urban and tend to sell to a younger market. I think it's important to show that a building is modern in these areas (market towns) but still keep them looking more traditional.*

### **Findings**

The first response, highlights the opinion that there should be greater freedom for developers and landowners in the design of new developments. The second answer is interesting as it seems to imply that market towns not more likely to attract older, more conservative purchasers who prefer traditional buildings.

### **Summary**

The architects interviewed clearly

express that they would prefer to adopt more contemporary design approaches in market towns. Whereas having expressed an openness to contemporary design in previous questions, the response of planners focusses upon the 'quality' of development, over the design approach. The response of the developers is similar, however there is an acknowledgement that areas can absorb different styles.

**Question 4. Do urban design strategies such as the cul-de-sacs and Radburn Models limit integration with existing communities?**

### **Architects**

#### **Respondent 1**

*Sometimes it's the case that new development which is located on the outskirts of a town, needs to somehow develop a community. With smaller developments it's much easier to be more integrated with the local community and where possible follow established patterns. In terms of the developer, if they do not think that the potential customer would want to interact with the wider community then often they will be designed in a way which does not interact. Again it's down to market in terms of the level of integration*

*that occurs and the type of design strategy used.*

### **Respondent 2**

*With the sites we have worked on it is difficult to use other strategies, as they are often infill sites. It is only the residents really that access these sites. In the instance of somewhere like Stokesley (Market Town North Yorkshire) that would be different, you would have to encourage greater interaction, the idea of one route in and one route out is not in keeping with those types of places.*

### **Findings**

Neither respondent fully addresses the question, however the answers are interesting. Approaches to the planning of schemes are highlighted as being constrained by the attitudes of developers or the practicalities of building in different locations.

### **Planners**

#### **Respondent 1**

I presume you mean integration “into” existing communities. Integration into existing communities is not just about physical design, it is far wider

reaching involving social contact and integration beyond the bounds of streetscape including socially culturally economically and digitally. The physical aspects of successful integration involve good physical connections in terms of pedestrian, vehicular and cycle routes, integration and sharing of open space and facilities.

### **Respondent 2**

*The main thing is not embracing urban sprawl which is what we have seen for some time now, which turn into cul-de-sac developments. They almost turn into another village or town, segregated from the historic or established development. I don't agree with this approach; we have had schemes which have gone down the route. Project density has a profound effect on this, some developers have produced smaller schemes which have integrated more effectively into the local environment. There are certain places where we have to say no, it's just not suitable to develop in such a location. It is however due to policy very difficult to argue for no development.*

### **Findings**

While the first response highlights wider issues that contribute to the integration of

new development in terms of highways, with established development it does fail to address the specifics of the question. The second response however highlights the segregation that can be shaped by the choices made in the planning of new developments, making them self-contained and inward looking as opposed to integrating through established settlement patterns. Respondent 2 implies that cul-de-sac developments do create separate developments, whereas their objective is integration.

### **Developers**

#### **Respondent 1**

The pros and cons to both of these approaches are planning system driven, new developments especially are looking at ways of minimizing the impact on local business and communities in terms of finding the best and easiest ways through the planning system. Not necessarily the only consideration, whilst greater integration is seen as a positive thing in planning, it becomes secondary to the objections of local people. It is local members and local people on planning committees who are making the decisions ultimately. Modern housing developments are driven by highways guidance, certainly

Northumberland Planning Authority detest rear car parking developments, people primarily want to park in front of their house is considered to contribute less to indiscriminate car parking. It is where streets are too narrow that parking to the rear most occurs, this though not favoured is due to road safety issues, which are dealt with by highways and are a grounds for refusal. As a result of this I even have examples of people using their front porches as airing cupboards, due to the change of emphasis from front to rear. In essence the front of the property is only so in aesthetic terms.

### **Respondent 2**

A lot of larger development is cul-de-sac because I guess that is what people want, it means that communities get privacy but also that a community develops in these developments. It's usually the case where developments are on the outskirts of a place that cul-de-sacs are used. Parking to the rear of properties tends to be in more confined areas and does lead to the rear of the properties being used more. It is not so popular at the moment, but sometimes it is the best option depending on the location.

### **Findings**

It is perhaps the responses from the

developers which are most coherent in terms of responding to this question. The first response clearly demonstrates the shortcomings of these approaches, but also draws attention to the role of local communities and highways planning in shaping the layout of developments. The second answer, is reflective of the point made by the architects in terms of this often being shaped by a notion of what people buying in new developments expect in terms of privacy and exclusivity.

### **Summary**

It is clear from the responses that there is no conclusive solution to this, highlighted are aspects of these approaches which contribute to a segregation of development. The influence of Radburn upon the use of houses and the public space around them is also key. Whilst there is some consensus that this approach is falling out of favor, it is clearly still used particularly in development which occurs more centrally. There is a notion that cul-de-sacs occur on the outskirts and Radburn in more central locations; and that purchasers prefer cul-de-sacs; but Radburn is imposed by traffic engineers due to constricted space for vehicles.

## **Question 5. How should cars be accommodated in the design of new housing schemes?**

### **Architects**

#### **Respondent 1**

*When you are designing schemes it feels like there is too much emphasis placed upon the car. Looking at a scheme like The Stathes in Gateshead, they have tried to do something different, locating cars around the edge of the site, with less car parking in the center. Unfortunately, if you go there in the evening there are cars parked everywhere on every verge. Cars I guess are part of society, very few schemes have been successful, without allowing cars and parking to dictate them up to a point. Having said that, going round Stockholm and the suburbs of Stockholm where parking is underground, is fantastic, but not something developers would invest in here. In our society as well people like to see their car outside their front door, in many respects if on-street car parking is planned well, it can be the best solution all round.*

#### **Respondent 2**

*Like with Radburn you can hide them around the back, but I am not sure that*



*really works. Using underground car parking, is one way but it doesn't really stack up with developers financially. It costs a huge amount to excavate. On street parking I guess is the traditional approach to this issue, but there are mixed views on it.*

### **Findings**

There is clearly no fixed solution for the provision of the motorcar in developments, both responses reference underground parking but acknowledge its cost. The other shared point is that public preference is for on street parking and the want to be able to observe your car. Looking at the responses from the surveys carried out with residents, it would appear that off road parking is a consideration for many.

### **Planners**

#### **Respondent 1**

*This aspect of the design of the scheme is often dealt with by the highways department, depending on the size of plot and size of scheme there has to be X amount of car parking. Ultimately there is encouragement by local and central government, that attempts to reduce this. The introduction of cycle lanes, building near established passenger routes helps.*

*There is also a difference between suburban and urban development, whereby a suburban development with provision for two car parking spaces, may not be viewed in the same way if it is located in a town centre. So in this case it might be provision for one car as there are alternatives in place in terms of transport.*

#### **Respondent 2**

*The provision of parking and the accommodation of cars should show consideration in terms of development location and as such. It should be done, so a street scene is not dominated by car parking with a pragmatic approach to end user needs.*

### **Findings**

Both answers focus on the relationship between the size of the development and the required provision for cars based on this. The first answer also highlights the need to discourage or reduce the reliance on the car, by facilitating alternative means of transport. But neither offer a solution to development in a market town.

### **Developers**

#### **Respondent 1**

Parking is dependent on the locality, I

am in favour of two things; realistically the only way to design out car parking on standard developments is providing a lot of public transport. Having legal restrictions on the numbers of cars, but again that is political. Then that is policed by usual car parking restrictions, in out of town developments generally speaking a mixture of parking is always best, frontage parking is possibly the best but leads to a car dominated public realm. Housing developments, that is expected to be the case but often doesn't lead to a very nice design. Shared surface areas with landscaping help alleviate the impact of this to the front of properties.

#### **Respondent 2**

It's the big question, I guess, planning does try to encourage more use of public transport, but it's all to do with the location of the development. I think really people like to see their cars so using drives and garages is a way of doing this, it might not be so appealing when there are a lot of cars on the street. You can locate them at the edges of developments but then the residents can't keep an eye on their cars. It also depends on the street layout, a terrace allows parking directly at the front but can lead to congestion, there is more room for drives in cul-de-sac developments and in

some ways the car is more visible but I guess people buying these properties know that.

### **Findings**

As with the planner's responses, the provision of public transport is identified as key to reducing the number of cars in a development. But highlights the importance of the location of the development in achieving this. Both responses highlight the use of frontage parking, but acknowledge the fact that cars can then dominate the street scene. However, the first answer highlights the use of different landscaping and surfacing approaches that can be used to soften the impact of parking.

### **Summary**

It is clear that there is no solution to the integration of cars into new development, but there are possible measures to limit their number and impact. The provision of public transport, a great pedestrian and cycle infrastructure can contribute to lower levels of car ownership. Can parking restrictions, limit the number of cars in a scheme but also reduce the parking of cars. Landscaping and greater input into the design approaches used also been highlighted. Whilst public transport

is readily accessible and efficient in somewhere like Durham, a market town such as Corbridge has more limited transport available. There are also factors such as where residents work, in larger towns these types of strategy may work.

### **11.37 Key Findings**

- Existing materiality and historic design, is the option which faces least resistance from planning and local communities.
- Developers seek the most efficient means of a proposal gaining planning permission.
- Public as part of the planning process and as consumers to design approaches taken in market towns.
- The planning of developments is sometimes intentionally segregated from the communities in which they are placed, either to form communities if the development is on the outskirts of town or to engender exclusivity.
- Designing to accommodate the car is in part dictated. The key means of reducing impact in the present is to provide sufficient alternatives.

### **11.38 Conclusion**

Perhaps what is most significant about these findings is the impact of the public as a participant in the planning process and as a consumer in shaping the design found in market towns. It is clear that developers seek the path of least resistance in achieving planning permission, by offering more traditional properties they perceive less risk in market terms but also less resistance in the planning process. It is clear from these findings that this dominates approaches taken, but through my visual analysis and research it appears that this has become the status quo. As one of the developers stated, changing demographics in market towns may contribute to changes in residential design in these areas. What is clear, is that in order to develop architecture which is contemporary but retains the identity of a given location greater public consultation may be needed and more persuasive cases made for the benefits of more contemporary design in these locations.

Clearly approaches in planning and design should assist greater integration into existing market towns, in order to integrate existing and new communities. This may also assist in the planning process

reducing impact on local communities. As highlighted by the first answer provided by the planners in relation to planning strategies, greater shared space and communal pedestrianized areas may contribute positively to this. In concluding this analysis, the results of the interviews and visual analysis. A conclusion will be established which will inform the design framework. This will establish the key criteria from which future developers and designers can construct their own research to inform a more locally responsive approach to domestic design in market towns.



## *12.0 Conclusion*

## 12.0 Conclusion

### 12.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to establish a theoretical basis for the development of regionally responsive design approaches in England. Assessing what could be considered regional or regionalist architecture and developing from the literature the means to establish what regional or regionalist architecture is.

### 12.2 Defining Region and Regionalism in Architecture

Defining regionalism in relation to architecture is difficult, the fields of geography, history, anthropology and sociology, carry similar approaches in definition. Be it; geographic, topographic, cultural or linguistic. Establishing what regional architecture is, becomes more problematic. In examining examples of architecture provided by *critical regionalist* theorists, all tend to exist in a specific place and are said to reflect the; culture, climate, topography and societal issues which pertain to a specific region. They are based primarily on the work of individual architects and on individual projects. The projects selected showed a

great deal of variety, typologically and geographically; with little explanation of a criteria by which their regional credentials could be established. By developing the criteria for analysis of architecture, it was the aim to solidify some of the key principals associated with regionalist and critical regionalist architecture. Many writers on the subject of regional architecture, warn of pastiche when engaging with historic styles, in producing what could be termed regional architecture. However, it is vernacular architecture which is most likely to reflect regional variation. Establishing the degree of regional variation was key to the study of architecture and region. The dialectical links with the use of the term vernacular, is indicative both an architecture language and the dialects it might contain. The referring to architecture of this type has changed Brunskill (1981), moves away from the use of vernacular in favour of traditional. Its connotations of localised language in terms of architecture are difficult to establish.

As with *critical regionalism*, defining and establishing clear regional styles of architecture, is made difficult by the chronology of its occurrence. At what point in time does architecture no longer

become vernacular? Its associations with pre-industrial architecture and craft, have placed the study of the subject in historical and archaeological terms, without being able to establish a true picture of the distribution of building types throughout a particular area or region due to preservation. This makes it difficult to clearly and definitively claim that a building is truly regional. It is also the degree of difference between buildings of a specific time and place, which proves problematic in establishing regional variation. With much of the classification and distinction between styles being based upon materiality and geological difference. The surviving examples of which, date to a period when more perishable materials are used and it can be argued less formalized building approaches to construction and design.

### 12.3 Theoretical Approach

The difficulties in trying to define both regional architecture and vernacular architecture, with the purpose of establishing the criteria by which more responsive approaches to design could be made. This prompted me to establish the key principals behind both theoretical viewpoints. The unifying factors being a

response to a localized set of criteria, from which building are produced. The primary factors being; climate, culture, material availability and knowledge. Whilst critical regionalism focused upon what it terms 'universal architecture' or what is loosely defined as more homogeneous approaches to design and development. The theoretical focus was upon schemes located around the world. In order to better focus the study of what region may be, it was essential to locate the study. In doing so, this had to be within a culture I understood, as dealing with a different culture would require a far deeper understanding than could be gained within the remit of this thesis.

The establishment of a visual framework of analysis based upon the work of key theoreticians, to visually analyse traditional and contemporary architecture was key to its understanding. The focus on domestic architecture was informed by its relevancy to the wider populace and the apparent ubiquity of development in this country. Establishing the root of this ubiquity through the analysis of the development of speculative building and its approaches to design and development. This revealed the key priority of profit, in an unstable market place, which has resulted in a reticence to adapt to or reflect

the present. In many respects reinforcing traditional notions of habitation, all be it in modern materials. Examining the cultural and social attitudes which have come to shape domestic design revealed a historic relationship with notions of status but also reflections of a pre-industrial rurality which has acquired connotations of safety and status.

The rural environment can be seen as containing a greater proportion of traditional and historic architecture, particularly in areas which have not had heavy industrialization. It is also an environment in which new development is required to respond in a more sympathetic manner, in part due to community but also the commercial importance of the historic environments, which attract visitors and in turn investment. Reaction to development in these areas can be traced back to the Essex Design Guide and the approaches to more constructive and sympathetic planning and design it encouraged amongst developers, the guide was primarily focused upon market towns. The formula of design guidance being adopted by many local authorities to temper the effects of speculative development. However, in the repetition of the Essex Design Guide, much of the source material and original

research has been lost, within many design guides mirroring contact what has emerged is a form of lip service to the materiality and basic forms found in a specific area.

## **12.4 Analysis**

The focus for analysis is market towns, was due to their scale and a greater degree of preservation of historic architecture. They are also the focus of new development, with the Essex Guide (1973) being established as a reaction to this. A survey of the larger market towns in Northumberland was undertaken, to establish the most suitable locations. The primary location of study is the market town of Corbridge, which became the focus of the most indepth analysis. It reflects a continuity of development from the medieval period to the present, enabling the assessment of its growth and development and the analysis of its residential architecture. Residential development in Corbridge was reflective of more individual approaches to architecture prior to the advent of speculative development. With larger and more uniform schemes following national house building trends from the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century onwards. Assessing these schemes, demonstrated a greater



standardisation of approach. There is a move towards mass produced elements, which correlated with the industrialization of the building process and the growing transport connectivity of the market town. Until the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century development followed established routes through the town, mirroring material, aesthetic and form. It is in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century that a more mass produced approach to design and development takes place, reflected in repetition of typology and an increased segregation from the centre. Development on the outskirts of Corbridge in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, appears to have been less scrutinised with a correlation between responses in form and material occurring in developments located in closer proximity to the historic core.

In order to establish a more coherent understanding of development in market towns, a visual analysis was undertaken in four contemporary developments. All located in market towns in the North East of England. The architecture analysed all referenced aspects of traditional architecture, it was evident that it was impossible to replicate earlier building traditions. The use of material and lack of attention paid to the detailing and composition of traditional architecture was

evident in all schemes.

To further establish an understanding of development in the present, a survey was conducted with homeowners in all four schemes. The results of which were not conclusive, but seemed to suggest that traditional appearance was preferable. A majority sighted a new property as an important factor in buying a house. The study also highlighted the professions involved in the process of new development. As the interrelated professions of planning, architecture and developer, were key to the completion of the developments assessed. A series of interviews were conducted, with two members of each profession. The results of which seemed to indicate a want, to produce more contemporary designs, but a reluctance to do so. The financial risk was highlighted by both architects and developers as a key factor, but also public opinion regarding new development.

### **12.5 Findings**

The research I have undertaken, has established that it is difficult to define regional architecture. What has been identified is a move away from localised production and craft, towards more

centralised approaches of mass production. The focus of the study in the North East of England allowed for a greater level of understanding to be established with regard to the development of domestic architecture. Localised studies enabled a comparative analysis, establishing the extent of national influence on localised architecture. It is apparent that from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century onwards there is a want to instil or imbue domestic architecture with a sense of past, this is closely related to interpretations of rural domesticity prior to the Industrial Revolution. Whilst it is possible to discern typologies which occur in different parts of the country prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, it is substantiating the individuality or uniqueness of a building design and approach in a specific area which proves more difficult. Rather than viewing localised historic forms as regional expression, they are more a product of specific cultural, geographic, climatic and material factors.

Whilst materiality in particular stone can be attributed to specific areas much of the construction in this material occurs from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century onwards during the period which is referred to as the great rebuilding. The 17<sup>th</sup> Century is also a period in which more universal classical

ideas of proportion and scale are more widely adopted in domestic architecture. Defining regional architecture in England is problematic, in part due to the varied influences on domestic architecture in the post medieval period. What can be clearly identified is a move towards greater standardization and a more universal approach to design. Current approaches to development echo much of the standardisation that can be attributed historically to the speculative housing industry. It is the materiality and design in contemporary development which do not reflected the present. When examining Victorian and Edwardian terraced developments, it is clear that there are often references to the past in terms of aesthetic. However, the technology and developments used in the schemes, are reflective of an engagement with advances in architectural design in the period. What speculative development fails to do in the present, is engage with the present. Instead for factors mentioned, it is primarily concerned with the past.

Domestic architecture has historically made use of a variety of influences which reference the past, from the Georgian referencing of classical architecture, to the influence of the Gothic in the

Victorian era. Despite these influences there has always been an attempt to create something which is of its time. The shift occurs in current design approaches in England, there is an attempt to mirror architecture of earlier periods and in turn adopt some of the associations of status attributed to them. This is often achieved through an approximation of a past style, limited by construction and materiality in the present. In many cases it is also the knowledge to effectively mirror the architecture of a specific period or style. In order to replicate past styles effectively, the same materials and techniques are needed in their design and construction; a cost which in the present is prohibitive. The result of this is approximation of a past, as opposed to a reflection of the present in terms of design and materiality.

## *Appendix A: Interviews with Owner Occupiers*



## **Appendix A: Owner Occupier Interviews**

### **Introduction**

The selection for interviews with owner occupiers, correlates with developments identified in the analysis. The locations of the developments was focused on market towns. Development in these locations is often smaller in comparison with out of town developments, due to their physical location and the already established context. It was important to establish the primary factors which influenced the purchase of properties in such locations and the key factors that influenced their purchase.

Developments in centralised locations tend towards 20-35 houses for larger developments and 4-10 houses for smaller developments.

### **Objective**

To fully understand the developments which have been analysed, it was important to understand the opinions of the owner

occupiers. This will establish the factors which influenced their decisions. The schemes have been analysed, to established the physical characteristics of the developments.

### **Questions**

The interviews were conducted in the housing developments examined: Corbridge, Durham, Alnwick and Prudhoe. It was important that the questions and available answers were structured. This had the advantage of increasing participation due to the focused questioning, taking up less time. The questions were intended to establish most important factors to the participants.

### **Interviews**

The interviews were conducted in person at each of the housing developments. Interview sheets were filled out with each owner occupier. Personal details were not recorded and photographic identification was provided,

to confirm my identity and affiliation to Northumbria University. A letter detailing the conduct of the interviews and their adherence to the Data Protection Act of 1998 was issued to each participant.

## Housing Questionnaire Northumbria University Department of Architecture and the Built Environment

This questionnaire will not record any personal details, other than the housing development in which it took place.

### 1. Was buying a new house a key consideration when purchasing your home?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 2. Did you consider buying a historic house?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 3. Was location in a market town primary factor in purchasing your house?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 4. Was the traditional appearance of the house an important consideration?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 5. Was your input into the specification of the house, a key consideration when buying a new house?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 6. Are the rooms in your house sufficiently sized?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 7. Was the provision of off road parking significant factor?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 8. Which of the above questions was most significant when deciding to purchase this house?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Residents Questionnaire Data

### The Chains Development

There are a total of **71** dwellings in The Chains. It is a mixed development between private ownership, local authority housing and private rental. There are in total **48** houses in the scheme, the breakdown of which is as follows:

**31** Private Ownership

**17** Owned by Northumberland County Council and maintained by ISOS

Of the **31** properties in private ownership **2** were for sale and **4** were privately rented. This reduced the overall figure to **25** properties, from which I received **22** responses.

#### 1. Was buying a new house a key consideration when purchasing your home?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	7	3	3	4	5
Percentage	32%	13%	14%	18%	23%

#### 2. Did you consider buying a historic property?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	3	2	4	12	1
Percentage	14%	9%	18%	54%	5%

#### 3. Was the location in a market town a primary factor in purchasing your house?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	3	3	0	10	6
Percentage	14%	9%	0%	45%	27%



**4. Was the traditional appearance of the house an important consideration?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	4	6	11	1
Percentage	0%	18%	27%	50%	5%

**5. Was your input into the specification of the house a key consideration when buying it?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	14	3	4	1	0
Percentage	64%	14%	18%	4%	0%

**6. Are the rooms in the house sufficiently sized?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	3	0	3	12	4
Percentage	5%	0%	6%	67%	22%

**7. Was the provision of off-road parking a significant factor in you purchasing this house?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	3	0	3	12	4
Percentage	14%	0%	14%	54%	18%

**8. Which of the above questions was most significant when buying this house?**

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
Respondents	7	0	15	0	0	0	0
Percentage	32%	0%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%

## Results of Survey at High Gate Durham.

The High Gate development comprises of **26** flats and **34** houses, of the households surveyed **16** were privately owned and **17** were rental properties.

- **16** Private Ownership
- **17** Rental Properties
- **1** No Answer

Of the properties in private ownership **16** homeowners participated in the survey, with the status of the property that did not answer undetermined.

### 1. Was buying a new house a key consideration when purchasing your home?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	3	5	5	2	1
Percentage	19%	31%	31%	13%	6%

### 2. Did you consider buying a historic property?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	1	2	4	8	1
Percentage	6%	13%	25%	50%	6%

### 3. Was the location in a market town a primary factor in purchasing your house?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	3	4	5	4
Percentage	0%	19%	25%	31%	25%

**4. Was the traditional appearance of the house an important consideration?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	1	4	3	6	2
Percentage	6%	25%	17%	37%	13%

**5. Was your input into the specification of the house a key consideration when buying it?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	8	4	1	3	0
Percentage	50%	25%	6%	19%	0%

**6. Are the rooms in the house sufficiently sized?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	8	3	5	0
Percentage	0%	50%	19%	31%	0%

**7. Was the provision of off-road parking a significant factor in you purchasing this house?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	2	4	8	2
Percentage	0%	12%	25%	54%	13%

**8. Which of the above questions was most significant when buying this house?**

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
Respondents	2	0	13	1	0	0	0
Percentage	13%	0%	81%	6%	0%	0%	0%



## Results of Survey at Potters Gate, Alnwick.

The Potters Gate development comprises of 8 flats and 7 houses, of the households surveyed all 7 were privately owned. This development is reflective of many produced in with market towns. Development near the center of market towns tends towards smaller schemes, which are mixed between multiple occupancy and private housing.

- 7 Houses in Private Ownership

Of the properties in private ownership all 7 homeowners participated in the survey.

### 1. Was buying a new house a key consideration when purchasing your home?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	4	1	2	0
Percentage	0%	57%	14%	29%	0%

### 2. Did you consider buying a historic property?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	1	0	2	4	0
Percentage	14%	0%	29%	57%	0%

### 3. Was the location in a market town a primary factor in purchasing your house?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	0	1	3	3
Percentage	0%	0%	14%	43%	43%

**4. Was the traditional appearance of the house an important consideration?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	1	2	4	0
Percentage	0%	14%	17%	57%	0%

**5. Was your input into the specification of the house a key consideration when buying it?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	8	4	1	3	0
Percentage	50%	25%	6%	19%	0%

**6. Are the rooms in the house sufficiently sized?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	0	2	5	0
Percentage	0%	0%	29%	71%	0%

**7. Was the provision of off-road parking a significant factor in you purchasing this house?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	1	1	5	0
Percentage	0%	16%	16%	68%	0%

**8. Which of the above questions was most significant when buying this house?**

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
Respondents	1	0	6	0	0	0	0
Percentage	14%	0%	86%	0%	0%	0%	0%

## Results of Survey at Acorn Square, Prudhoe.

The Acorn Square development comprises of 13 flats and 5 houses, of the households surveyed 4 were privately owned and 1 was for sale. Whilst this is a low number of houses to examine, it is reflective of the two type of development found in the North East in association with market towns. Development near the center of market towns tends towards smaller schemes, which are mixed between multiple occupancy and private housing.

- 4 Private Ownership
- 1 No Answer

Of the properties in private ownership 4 homeowners participated in the survey, with the status of the property for sale not being established.

### 1. Was buying a new house a key consideration when purchasing your home?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	1	0	3	0
Percentage	0%	25%	0%	75%	0%

### 2. Did you consider buying a historic property?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	3	0	1	0
Percentage	0%	75%	0%	25%	0%

### 3. Was the location in a market town a primary factor in purchasing your house?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	0	0	4	0
Percentage	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%



**4. Was the traditional appearance of the house an important consideration?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	0	2	2	0
Percentage	0%	0%	50%	50%	0%

**5. Was your input into the specification of the house a key consideration when buying it?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	3	0	0	1	0
Percentage	75%	0%	0%	25%	0%

**6. Are the rooms in the house sufficiently sized?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	1	0	3	0
Percentage	0%	25%	0%	75%	0%

**7. Was the provision of off-road parking a significant factor in you purchasing this house?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Respondents	0	0	0	4	0
Percentage	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%

**8. Which of the above questions was most significant when buying this house?**

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7
Respondents	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
Percentage	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

## *Appendix B: Interviews with Professionals*

## **Appendix B: Professionals Interviews**

### **Introduction**

The interviews with professionals focussed on the professions directly involved in the development of new housing. By interviewing architects, planners and developers, an understanding of development in the present could be established.

### **Objective**

Having established the criteria by which owner occupiers have purchased, it was then important to establish the opinions of professionals. The aim of which was to establish a more holistic understanding of the design and development of housing schemes in market towns. By interviewing owner occupiers and professionals a comparative analysis of the data can be undertaken, to establish the motivations of professionals and consumers and the influence of both on residential design.

### **Questions**

The format of the interviews was semi-structured, to enable more comprehensive answers to be given. The aim of this was to establish the perspectives of different professions, involved in the design and development of new housing schemes.

### **Interviews**

The interviews were conducted by telephone due to the working commitments of the participants. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. No personal details were included in the thesis, other than the company or organisation the interviewee belonged to. A letter detailing the conduct of the interviews and their adherence to the Data Protection Act of 1998 was issued to each participant.



## **Interviews with professionals**

**Question 1. Should new development incorporate similar material and aesthetic design strategies to the existing architecture of a given location?**

**Question 2. Why does new development lean towards an emulation of historic architecture?**

**Question 3. Should new domestic architecture be more reflective of architectural design in the present.**

**Question 4. Do urban design strategies such as the cul-de-sac's and Raburn models limit integration existing communities?**

**Question 5. How should cars be accommodated in the design of new housing schemes?**



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Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey. It is being conducted as part of a PhD study by Leo Moreton, from the Northumbria University; Department of Architecture and Built Environment. The aim of the study, is to establish attitudes to the development of new properties in historic towns. This letter is to confirm that you have participated in a survey and are happy with the manner in which it has been conducted.

No information was recorded, concerning your name or address as any part of this study. The only information which will be recorded are the answers you provide, the sector in which you work and the position you hold. All information gathered will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Any further questions or concerns can be addressed by myself on the above email.

Kindest Regards

Leo Moreton

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leo Moreton".

*Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive*  
Professor Andrew Wathey

Northumbria University is the trading name of the University of Northumbria at Newcastle





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